

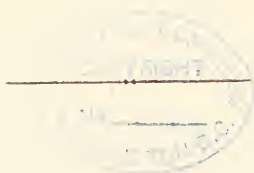




POLITICAL ESSAYS.

BY
PARKE GODWIN.

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TO
CHARLES SUMNER.

MY DEAR SUMNER:

I TAKE the liberty of dedicating this volume to you, because I know of no one more likely to approve its general objects, or whose name will lend it greater honor. Before you were prostrated by the hand of violence, you stood first in the admiration of your young countrymen—but now, the effect of that cowardly blow has been, to make you first also in their sympathy and love.

I have the honor to be,

Your Friend,

PARKE GODWIN.

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OUR PARTIES AND POLITICS.

FOREIGNERS complain that they cannot easily understand our political parties, and we do not wonder at it, because those parties do not always understand themselves. Their controversies, like the old *homoousian* disputes of the church, often turn upon such niceties of distinction, that to discern their differences requires optics as sharp as those of Butler's hero, who could

———"Sever and divide
Betwixt northwest and northwest side."

What with whigs, democratic whigs, democrats, true democrats, barnburners, hunkers, silver grays, woolly heads, soft shells, hard shells, national reformers, fire-eaters, and fillibusteros, it is easy to imagine how the exotic intellect should get perplexed! Even to our native and readier apprehensions, the diversity of principle hidden under this diversity of

names is not always palpable ; while it must be confessed, that our parties are not universally so consistent with themselves as to enable one to write their distinctive creeds in a horn-book.

Yet, on a closer survey, it will be found that parties here are very much the same, in their characteristic tendencies and aims, as parties elsewhere. They originate in that human nature which is the same everywhere (modified by local circumstances only), and they exhibit, under the various influences of personal constitution, ambition, interest, etc., the same contrasts of selfishness and virtue, of craft and honesty, of genius and falsehood, of wisdom and folly.

It is true that our differences are not seemingly so fundamental and well-pronounced as those of older nations. We have no contests here as the elementary principles of government. A monarchist is, perhaps, not to be found from the St. Lawrence to the Rio Grande, any more than a rhinoceros or lammergeyer. We are all republicans ; we all believe in the supremacy of the people ; and our convictions, as to the general nature and sphere of legis-

lation, are as uniform as if they had been produced by a mental ambrotype.

But within the range of this more general unanimity, there has been room and verge enough, for the evolution of many heated and distempered antagonisms. We are agreed that our governments shall be republican, but as to what functions they should exercise and what they should leave to the people we are not agreed; we agree that the separate States shall be sovereign and independent, but to what extent they may carry that sovereignty and independence we do not agree; we agree that the benefits of the Federal Union shall be, from time to time, extended to new territories, but on what terms they may be extended we do not agree; we agree, generally, to keep aloof from the domestic affairs of other nations, but as to the details of our foreign policy inside of this salutary rule, we do not agree. There have been among us always, on all these points, radical dissents and oppositions. We have parties of many stripes and calibres—some which favor, and some which oppose, a larger concentration of power in the Federal Govern-

ment; some which propose to accomplish their social objects by legislative, and others by voluntary action; some which desire to restrict the elective franchise, and others to extend it; some which repel the acquisition of more territory, and others willing to run the risk of war for its sake; some which aim at the destruction of the Union, and others eager to sacrifice honor and liberty itself to the preservation of the Union. In short, there is among our differences of opinion, an endless scope for the formation of parties.

It is a common saying, we know, that there can be but two parties in any nation—the movement and the stationary parties—and this is true as a philosophical generalization, deduced from the changes of large periods of time; but it is not true always as a contemporary and actual fact. In the long run, of course, all parties will be found to have advanced or retarded the progress of society; but in the immediate and present aspect of things, parties are more than two—are half a dozen at least. Look where we will, provided free political discussion is allowed, and we shall find, to use the

French mode of marking their relations, a centre, a right, a left, a right centre, and a left centre, besides a miscellaneous herd of eccentrics, each representing some contrast or gradation of opinion. In France, for instance, before France was reduced by the bayonet to a single man, there were the several branches of the legitimists, the Napoleonites, the republicans, the mountain, and the socialists ; and in Great Britain, there are the tories, the whigs, the radicals, the chartists, etc. In the same way, in this country, we possess the several combinations to which we referred in the opening paragraph ; and though their differences, as we have said, are not so marked as those which prevail between the legitimists and the republicans of Europe, they are still valid, positive, and important.

The earliest parties known to our history were those of the colonial times, when the grand debate as to the rights of the colonies was getting under way, and all men took sides, either as whigs or tories. They had imported their distinctive names, and to some extent their distinctive principles, from the mother

country, from the iron times of Cromwell and the Puritans ; but, in the progress of the controversy, as it often happens, they were led upon wholly new and vastly broader grounds of dispute than they had at first dreamed. The little squabble, as to the limits and reaches of the imperial jurisdiction, expanded into a war for national existence, nay, for the rights of humanity ; and what was at the outset a violent talk only about stamp-duties, and taxes on tea—mean and trivial even in its superficial aspects—concealed the noblest political theories, the sublimest political experiments, that had yet been recorded in the annals of our race. The whigs of the Revolution gave to the world a new idea—that of a state founded upon the inherent freedom and dignity of the individual man. Gathering out of the ages all the aspirations of great and noble souls, all the yearnings of oppressed peoples, they had concentrated them into one grand act of emancipation. They actualized the dreams of time, and in the latest era of the world, and on a new continent, introduced, as they fondly supposed, that reign of heavenly justice which the primitive golden

ages had faintly foreshadowed, which patriots had so long struggled and sighed for in vain, and which the political martyrs of every clime had welcomed only in beatific vision.

It was this patriot party of the Revolution which gave the inspiration and original impulse to our nation, which formed its character and sentiment, and erected the standard of opinion, which was destined, for some years, at least, to be the guide of all our movements. It fused the national mind by the warmth of its convictions, or rather by the fiery earnestness of them, into that single thought of democratic freedom which has been the ground and substance of our national unity. The medley of settlers, chance-wafted hitherward, from the several corners of Europe, like seeds borne by the winds, were nourished by it into an organic whole, and have since been retained by its influences, under all diversities of constitution, climate, and interest, in the coherence and uniformity of a national being. Our fathers were so not merely after the flesh, but after the spirit. They generated our minds as well as our bodies, and their sublime thought

of a free state (an inspiration greater than their knowledge), has been the fruitful germ of our best inward and outward life. No other people have had so grand a national origin; for we were born in a disinterested war for human rights, and not for territory, and under the stimulus of an idea which still transcends the highest practical achievements of our race.

It has been the greatness, the predominance, the profound inherency of this original American idea, which, forcing a general conviction, has produced the comparative uniformity of our parties, and confined their divisions to transient or trivial and personal differences. But there is also another cause for that uniformity, in the fact that as societies advance in the career of civilization, their political divisions are less marked, but more subtle in principle; less gross, but more indirect in the display of animosity and feeling. The rival chiefs of two factions of savages, who quarrel as to which shall eat the other, settle the matter with a blow of the tomahawk; but in a more refined community, the entire population may get at loggerheads, over the construction of a

phrase in some dubious document, which they determine by vociferous clamors at a public meeting, or in able leading articles. One is sometimes amused, therefore, when a foreigner in the United States—an Englishman, for instance—complacently remarks that we have no great parties, no profound radical, comprehensive questions, about which we may beat out each other's brains.—“You have no question of church and state,” he says; “no immense projects for parliamentary reform; no tremendous interests hanging upon some old law; no widely-separated and powerful classes to be plunged into fierce and terrific conflicts. All that you quarrel about is summed up in the per centage of a tariff, the building of a railroad, or the possession of a few offices.” In saying this, John imagines that he has reduced us to a lilliputian insignificance and littleness, especially by the side of his obese and ponderous magnitude. But we answer him, that those “great questions,” about which he and his fellows, all the world over, are pummeling each other, or at least, tearing their passions to tatters, were settled

for us before we were born, and that we esteem it a happiness and glory to have got rid of them, even though they have left us little more to quarrel about than the cut of a neighbor's coat, or the shape of his nose. We also hint to him, further, that the progress of nations, as we conceive it, consists in the gradual decay of political, and the growth of social questions, or, in other words, in the simplification and reduction of the machinery of government, with which politics have chiefly to do, and the consequent extinction of politicians, who become more and more a pernicious class, with, at the same time, a continuous aggrandizement of society itself, of its industry, its arts, its local improvements, and its freedom as well as order.

The most natural and the most permanent of our past political divisions has arisen out of the peculiar structure of the federal government, the nature and extent of its jurisdiction, and its relations to the States. As soon as the Federal Constitution went into effect, the differences which had almost defeated its ratification before the people—the counteracting centripetal and centrifugal forces, as they are

called—were developed into strong and positive party hostilities. The federalists and the anti-federalists took possession of the political field, and the noise of their conflicts sounded through many years, giving a sting to the debates of the Senate House, embittering the intercourse of domestic life, and bequeathing prejudices to the minds of posterity.

The mere disputes as to the authority of the general government might not, perhaps, have led to such earnest and envenomed battles, at the outset, if they had not been complicated, especially under the leadership of Jefferson and Hamilton, with the profounder questions of individual rights just then agitating the Old World. Hamilton, a man of talent, bred in camps, distrustful of the masses, an admirer of the British Constitution, and accustomed to the rigor of military rule, was disposed to rely upon the strong arm of government, and may be regarded as the representative of the sentiment of LAW : while Jefferson, on the other hand, a man of genius, self-confident, generous, sanguine, tolerant of theories, an acolyte, if not a teacher, of the French school

of manners and thought, leaned to the spontaneous action of the people, and was the representative of LIBERTY. Thus, the party of State rights and the party of liberty came to be identified, and took the name, after a time, of the democratic republican party, while federalism, or the doctrine of a strong central government, jumped in naturally with the doctrine of law and order. There was a double pressure of tendencies separating the two parties, and intensifying their hatreds, and, in the exacerbations of the times, inducing them to accuse each other respectively of tyranny and licentiousness. A federalist, in the opinions of the republicans of those days, was only a monarchist in disguise, watching his opportunity to strangle the infant liberties of his country in the cradle, and to restore the emancipated colonies to their dependence upon Great Britain, while the federalist retorted the generous imputation of his adversary, by calling him a jacobin, a scoundrel, and a demagogue, eager to uproot the foundations of order, and let loose the lees and scum of French infidelity and French immorality upon society. We, at this

day, looking through the serener atmosphere of history, know that they were both mistaken in their extreme opinions, and that they were both good patriots after all, necessary to each other, as it now appears, in tempering the dangerous excesses which might have followed the unchecked predominance of either, and in giving a more uniform and stable action to our untried political system. But we cannot conceal the deep significance of the contest in which they were engaged.

In all the subsequent changes of parties, the distinction of federalist and anti-federalist has been maintained, in theory at least, and sometimes in name, if not so rigidly in practice. It is a distinction that will only pass away with the final establishment of the truth, though it may often be obscured in the fluctuating movements of politics. During the war of 1812-15, the Federalists, as they were termed, were the most vigorous opponents of the use of power by the general government, and their most offensive acts—the proceedings of the Hartford Convention—were nothing worse than an attempt, as

it was deemed, to arrest and restrain the encroachments of the central authority upon the rights and interests of the separate States ; whilst, on the other hand, the most enormous exercise of that authority—the acquisition of Louisiana by Jefferson—the suppression of South Carolina nullification by Jackson—the annexation of Texas by Tyler—have been resorted to by the leaders of the so-called democratic or anti-federalist party. Indeed, so little consistency has been exhibited by parties in this respect, that it has been observed, that in general, whatever party is in possession of the federal government is disposed to push the use of its functions to the utmost practicable verge, while the party out of power opposes this use, and assumes the virtue of continence. Under the administration of Jackson, when the struggle with the National Bank arose, the lines of demarcation between the principles of the federalists and anti-federalists were once more somewhat strictly drawn, and the shibboleths and rallying cries of that day have continued to be used by the politicians, for the most part impertinently, up to the present

time. In the administration of the States, too, there has been an undeniable line drawn, a gulf fixed, as we may say, between the friends of a strong and centralized government and the friends of social and popular freedom; but we may add, that as no party is now entitled to a monopoly of either class, this distinction has subsided. The feelings and convictions in which it originated have not passed away, and they will not speedily pass away; but there has been a lull in the public mind, in respect to them, partly produced by the decided gravitation of opinion to the democratic theory both of Federal and State Government, and partly by the emergencies of new grounds of conflict. The débris of former convulsions is all that the older parties have left us.

An anomaly in the social system of some of the States, however, not supposed, when the Federal Union was formed, to be so pregnant with consequences, as it has since proved, has been a chief cause of the complication of parties, and the principal incentive and danger of our more modern contests.

The primary idea of our institutions was, as

we have seen, that of a free Democratic Republic. The liberty and equality of the people were the animating spirit of our revolution, and the inspiring genius of the constitutional structure to which it gave rise. But among the States, which form the elements of the confederacy, there are some not strictly democratic, and scarcely republican. They are aristocracies or oligarchies, built upon a diversity of races. Their political and social privileges are confined to a class, while all the rest of their inhabitants are slaves.

The consequence has been a growing divergency, though it was not always apparent or even suspected, between the convictions, the interests and the tendencies of one half the Union, which was eminently free and democratic, and those of the other half, which was slaveholding and aristocratic.

The reasons why this difference was not so strongly felt at the outset, were, because the slaves were few, and the great and good men who formed the Union, and helped to knit and bind together its primitive filaments, were almost unanimous in the sentiment, that this

system of bondage would be only temporary. Like a growing youth in the flush and impulse of his young strength, they were scarcely conscious of the cancer lurking in the blood.

But the vice, contrary to their expectations, has developed itself—the sentiment in regard to it has changed—it has become interwoven with vast and intricate interests, and it is now sustained positively by political and philosophical argument

Another reason why the radical vices of the federal relation were not more speedily extruded and discovered, was this: the slaveholders have been, for the most part, in alliance with the democratic or popular party. Devoted sticklers for equality among themselves, fierce lovers of their own liberties, which were to be secured from the molestation of others only by a rigid maintenance of the sovereignty of the separate States, they have naturally sympathized with the party which appeared to be most devoted to these ends. Their sentiment of personal independence and right was the same sentiment which animates the masses of the free States in their opposition to the encroachments

of power, while their need of security dictated the same doctrine of State-rights, to which the people adhered in their instinct for local self-government. Thus, the democratic party of the North, and the State-rights party of the South, have formed what was called the great Republican party of the Union. The model democrats of the nation, Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence, Madison, who was one of the ablest expounders of the Constitution, Macon, who tolerated no injustice in legislation, were slaveholders in their local spheres; while the popular party of the North, clamoring against the pretensions of law and privilege for a larger liberty, were still, strange to say, their adherents and friends.

It was an alliance, however, which, in the very nature of its components, could not endure forever. An aristocracy is compelled, by the exigencies of its position, to become conservative; while a democracy, on the other hand, is progressive. A league between them may be maintained, so long as they have certain objects in common—an enemy to repulse, or a conquest to achieve—but when these

common objects are attained, their radical incompatibility will begin to appear. It is impossible for men who sincerely believe in the equal rights of men, to coalesce permanently with others whose practice is an habitual invasion of those rights; it is impossible for an order of society, founded upon the most unlimited freedom of labor, to coexist long in intimate relations with a society founded upon bond or forced labor; and it is no less impossible for political leaders, the breath of whose nostrils is popular emancipation and progress, to combine with leaders whose life is an utter denial of emancipation and progress.

So long as the South and the North, in the earlier periods of national development, looked to the same ends—to certain general organizing purposes—to a strict construction of the Constitution—to a denial of the schemes for enlarging the federal power—to the independence of the States—they were able to act together, and the happiest results have been promoted by that unity; but when their mutual solicitude for these ends was outgrown—when, in the progress of empire, the question arose, whether the

social system of the one or the other should prevail, to the exclusion, which is unavoidable, of its opponent, their friendship grew sultry, and a strenuous grapple and fight became imminent.

If we were called upon, then, to describe the political parties of this nation, as they are, or as they have been gradually formed, by its developing circumstances, we should say that they were, 1st, The Pro-slavery, sometimes, though unjustly, called the Southern party, which is the propagandist of the opinions and interests of the small oligarchy—about 60,000 in all—who hold their fellow-men in bondage; 2d, The Democrats, divided into the traditional or routine democrats, who masquerade in the faded wardrobe of democracy, but care more for office than principle, and the real democrats, who still retain the inspirations of the Jefferson school; 3d, The Whigs, who are the legitimate depositories of federal principles, crossed and improved by modern liberalism; 4th, The Fire-eaters, who seem to be opposed to the union of the Northern and Southern States under any circumstances; and 5th, The Abolitionists, who

are rather a moral than a political combination, though a large branch of them are not opposed to decided political action. These we shall notice briefly in the reverse order in which they are named.*

The Abolitionists and the Fire-eaters, representing the extremes of northern and southern feeling, have had no little influence on public opinion, but hardly any as yet on the direct action of the government. In eloquence, earnestness, and, we suspect, integrity of purpose, they are superior to the other parties (the Abolitionists, in particular, absorbing some of the finest ability of the country, oratorical and literary, and a great deal of the noblest aspiration), but they are both too extravagant in opinion, and too violent in procedure, to conciliate a large and effective alliance. Their denunciations of the Union, proceeding from con-

* At the time this was written, the new Republican party, which is a fusion of the liberal men of all the old parties, on the ground of hostility to the spread of slavery, and the "Know-Nothing party," who, fancying that they have had a surfeit of foreigners, are afflicted with a kind of political indigestion and nausea, were not born. They are referred to elsewhere.

trary views of its effects, the one condemning it because it is supposed to sanction, and the other, because it is supposed to interfere with slavery, neutralize each other, and lead more tranquil minds—minds whose brains are not boiling in their skulls—to a conviction that they are both alike wrong. The federal Constitution does not recognize the existence of slavery as such, at all, and in no form, except indirectly; nor does it, on the other hand, confer upon the government any authority for meddling with slavery, treating the subject wisely as a matter of exclusive state jurisdiction; yet the spirit and the letter of that instrument are alike instinct with freedom, and rightly interpreted, set up an insuperable barrier against the extension of any form of servitude. The malice of its enemies finds food, not in the legitimate operations of the organic law, as the framers of it intended it to operate, but in those deviations which the craft of politicians has superinduced upon its action, in those warpings and torturings of its structure, by which it has been made to cover more than it reaches.

It is no offense to the Whigs, we trust, for indeed it is only repeating the frequent avowals of their own leading exponents to say, that as a party they are pretty much defunct. Whatever uses their organization may have subserved in the course of our political history, and nobody will deny them some merits, however splendid the talent by which their long but losing struggle has been illustrated, from the day in which their policy was inaugurated by Hamilton, until that in which its funeral discourse was uttered in "a fine rich brogue," by General Scott, it has never succeeded in becoming, for more than a year or two at a time, a predominant party. It has been able, on occasions, to carry its principles into effect, but not to the satisfaction of a permanent majority. Its distinguishing measures have been, on the other hand, repeatedly and unequivocally condemned. Not the most sanguine adherent can now hope to see them revived. The questions of a National Bank, of a Protective Tariff, of Internal Improvements, of the Distribution of the Public Lands, are adjudicated questions; no court exists wherein to bring an appeal;

and the wisest thing, for those who have been worsted in the controversy, is to do what the most of them have done—submit. Their once great and accomplished leaders sleep in honorable graves; no exigencies of state will ever again awaken the solemn eloquence of Webster, nor the clarion voice of Clay ever again summon his lieges to the battle. The masters are dead, and their followers are dispersed or at feud; or should they rally again, it can only be under other names and for deeper and nobler objects. A remnant of the camp of former times, a forlorn hope with Millard Fillmore as the drum-major, may strive to keep the old organism alive; but it is clear, in the present aspect of affairs, that it cannot possess more than a semi-vitality, useless for good and painful to behold. We do not say that the theory of politics which has hitherto animated the Whigs is extinct, that our people will no more be dazzled by visions of strong and splendid governments, nor seek to effect by unitary legislation what others hope to accomplish by voluntary effort; on the contrary, this tendency is perhaps as strong now as ever it was; but what we assert is, that the

particular measures for which the Whigs have been banded together, are obsolete, and the party, as a party, utterly without meaning.

The Democrats of the purer stamp, the real Democrats as we have called them, are like the Whigs, in a state of comparative dissolution; or rather, they are scattered through their party at large, and elsewhere, as leaven through meal, without having any effective control in it. These democrats still abide by the original principles of democracy—represent the popular instincts—cling to living ideas of justice, and equal rights and progress, and refuse to follow their fellows in a *pell-mell* abandonment of themselves to the seductions of the slaveholders. They are not few in number, as we are inclined to think, either at the North or the South, comprising, as we fain hope, a majority of the young men of the nation, yet uncorrupted by official contacts, as well as possessing the sympathies of many among parties which go by other names; but, having no separate organization anywhere, they are sadly overborne by the practiced managers of the old organizations, who wield the machinery of party action,

and consequently of power. In their external or immediate pretensions they are not formidable ; but in the might of their sentiments they will capture the future. A steady continuance in integrity, a deaf ear turned to the charmings of the adders of office, an eagerness to consult, amid all the shiftings of policy, the fresh impulses of the honest young heart of the nation, will, ere long, gather about them the intellect, the virtue, and the popular instinct of right, which are the redeeming elements of states.

The other class of Democrats, whom we denominate the official or machine-democrats, because they move and talk as they are wound up, mean as they might be supposed to be, yet constitute, in reality, a distinct and powerful body. It is not a new remark, we believe, that successful parties collect about them large squads of speculating politicians, who care nothing for truth or righteousness, while they have a ravenous appetite for distinction and provender. They are not precisely camp-followers, because they sometimes fight in the ranks, but their interest in contests is determined rather by the prospect of booty

than by any convictions they entertain. Like Bunyan's By-ends, who followed Religion for the silver slippers she wore, they are patriots because it is profitable to be patriots. In other words, they are democrats because the democrats are generally in the ascendant, which means in office. Sometimes they slip round to the Whigs, when the Whigs have a sure look for success; but they find it safer, in the long run, to be of the other side. No men more noisy than they in shouting the usual rallying cries, none more glib in the commonplaces of electioneering, and none so apparently earnest and sincere. But at heart they are only the greediest and shabbiest of scoundrels. It is upon their shoulders that incompetent and bad men are borne to places of high trust, and from them that the Prætorian guards of republics are selected in the hour of their eclipse and hastening decay.

This class of democrats flourishes chiefly in those calm times when no great controversy agitates the nation, and awakens strong and burning passions. In crises which call for lofty ambitions and abilities, they are of no use; in

fact, they are shriveled and consumed by the heat of them, and slink out of the way till the fiery storm be past. But they return with the return of public indifference or reaction, when there are few who care to watch them, like the flies, which a strong wind had blown from their carrion. As the reins of power at those times are apt to fall into the hands of little men—of a Tyler or a Pierce, for instance—it is the golden hour for narrow intellects and base hearts. The art of administration at once degenerates into mere trickery or management. Toads crawl into the seats of the eagles. Public policy fluctuates between the awkwardness of conscious incompetence and the arrogance of bullyism. The possession of office becomes a badge, either of imbecility, or cunning, or insolence. It is won by services that elsewhere would warrant a halter, and it is conferred, not as the meed of patriotic deserts, but as the wages of supple and mercenary service. They who dispense patronage, do so in the conviction of Walpole, that every man has his price, and they who receive it, take it with a full knowledge that the stamp of venality is

on every token of silver. Superiors in place are not superiors in merit, only superiors in craft and recklessness; while inferiors don the gilt lace and plush of their official varletism without a blush on their cheeks, or a sense of shame at their hearts. Government, in short, is converted into a vast conspiracy of placemen, managed by the adroiter villains of the set who control elections, dictate legislation, defeat reforms, and infuse gradually their own muck-worm spirit into the very body of the community. The masses, under the paralysis of such a domination, seem to be rendered insensible to the usual influences of honor and virtuous principle; are deadened almost to the heroic examples of their fathers; lose the inspiring traditions of an earlier greatness and grandeur of conduct; and virtually, if not actually, sink into slaves. Then, schemers of wrong riot in the impunity of licence, and projects of wickedness are broached, which, a few years before, would have caused a shiver of indignation to run through the whole land.

The Pro-Slavery Party, sometimes called the

Southern Party, we are unwilling to speak of by this name, because we carefully distinguish between its southern members, who are the propagandists of slavery, and those gentlemen of the South who simply wish their peculiar domestic system to be let alone ; while we do not distinguish between them and their northern coadjutors—dough-faces are they hight—who are their superserviceable instruments. The first distinction we make, because we know that there are large numbers of intelligent and conscientious people at the South who do not believe that slavery is a good or a finality : on the contrary, who feel that it is a burden at best—a sad and dreadful inheritance : who are anxious to manage it wisely, with a view to its ultimate extinction ; and, consequently, would dread to see it strengthened or extended, looking with hope and Christian prayer to the day when the combined influences of modern Industrialism, and Democracy, and Christianity, shall have relieved them of their painful weight of responsibility. But we do not make the second distinction, because the most efficient, and by far the most despicable branch of the

Pro-Slavery Party is that which, educated at the North, under all the genial inspirations of a free condition of existence, still voluntarily casts itself at the feet of Slavery, to eat the dirt of its footmarks, and lick the sores on its limbs. For the first class of slaveholders, we cherish not only a profound sympathy, but a genuine esteem; we have friends among them whose excellences of character are themes for meditation and gratitude; and to the propagators of the system, even, we can attribute an entire honesty of purpose, though a mistaken one; but for its cringing northern sycophants we have no feeling but one of unmitigated pity and contempt.

This Pro-Slavery Party, which grew mainly out of the old republican or democratic party, and which has never even taken a distinct name, has been the successful party of our history. It has achieved a more signal ascendancy than any other party, and it has done so, not by superior ability nor a more illustrious virtue, but by dint of its tact, and a compact and persistent determination. Its leaders, per-

ceiving at an early day that they should play a losing game, if they attempted to stand alone, trusting to the ordinary means of success—to the natural supremacy of talent, to the growth of numbers, and to the rectitude of their cause—hit upon the expedient of identifying themselves with the popular party of the North, Having accomplished that, they gradually directed that party to the defense and spread of their peculiar doctrines. Not satisfied with the concession, which every intelligent and judicious northerner was then glad to make, that slavery was a system exclusively within the control of the States, they first insinuated and then insisted that slavery was not to be discussed at all at the North, because a moral interference was quite as intolerable as a direct political interference. This pretension, which was just the same as if Russia or Turkey should insist that the principles of absolutism should not be discussed in the United States, because Russia and Turkey had commercial treaties with the United States, found merchants sordid enough to instigate mobs against those who questioned it, and poli-

ticians wicked enough to entrench it behind the laws. Yet the taboo of sanctity did not stop there, but was drawn around regions in which all the States were clearly and equally interested—such as the district of Columbia and the public lands—while the Post Office, common to all, was forbidden to carry “incendiary documents,” as every argument or appeal against the system was called, and petitions to Congress referring in the remotest manner to it, were treated with contumely and disdain.

This point once reached, it was easy to take a bolder stand, and to clamor, with all the vehemence of partisan heat, for the introduction of slavery into those new and virgin territories which Providence had opened on our Western borders, as we had fondly hoped, for the reception of the outcast republicans of Europe, and for a new and grander display of the beneficent influence of republicanism. And this impudent claim—a claim which had no validity in law nor sanction in humanity—the pretense that a local institution, existing entirely by municipal usage, and without an iota of validity beyond that—should override all considerations

of justice and policy under a threat of civil war, in case of its disallowance—was not too much for the forbearance of the North, in its ardent devotion to peace and the Union! Ah! how one submission begets another, until the chains of a servitude are riveted around the necks of the victim! The southern party, thus triumphing in the territories, demanded in the next place, that the free States should be made a hunting-ground for slaves, that every man of the North should be compelled by law to do what no gentleman of the South would do for himself, or could be, under any circumstances, forced to do for others, i. e., put himself on a level with blood-hounds, and become a slave-catcher; and the law was passed! Wresting the power from the States, that it might be exercised by Congress, which was not authorized to exercise it, it was passed; creating tribunals of justice which Congress was not authorized to create; rejecting from its provisions the most sacred rights of trial by jury and habeas corpus, this law was passed; imposing unusual and offensive penalties upon all who should refuse to

take part in its execution, and bribing the officers appointed to administer it by offers of higher wages in the case of a decision adverse to the poor fugitive : this odious and disgraceful law was recorded on the statute books of the "Model Republic," in the central, the culminating year of the nineteenth century. Its passage, however, was not the worst feature of the transaction ; the craven acceptance vouchsafed it by the pulpits and the commercial circles ; the pliant ease with which the North bent to the insult, was the significant fact in the proceeding, which more than all others covered many an honest face with shame.

It is proper to say that one consideration prevailed in inducing this ready humiliation : the hope of removing the question from the sphere of political agitation. We are bound to believe, in justice to human nature, that the many who welcomed the compromises of 1850, did so in the sincerest conviction that they would put an end to the difficulties between the North and South ; and we must also confess that it seemed, for a time, as if that result were about to be effected. The na-

tional conventions of both the great parties acquiesced in the settlement; a President was chosen whose inaugural address was little more than a long proclamation of intended fidelity to it; and Congress came together and acted in a more fraternal spirit than had been manifested for years. Alas! the uncertainty of mortal expectations! In the midst of this apparent quietude, a bill, all bristling with outrages and dangers, is sprung upon the country. We mean, of course, the bill for the organization of Nebraska and Kansas territories, whose sole object was to repeal the solemn prohibition, erected thirty years ago, against the spread of slavery into those regions. At a time when there was not a citizen legitimately within those territories—when no part of the nation, save a few intriguers, was dreaming of such a measure; when not a single State, nay, not a single individual, had called for it—in the face of the most strenuous opposition from North and West, this bill was suddenly presented to a Congress not elected in reference to it, and forced to a passage by all the tyrannical arts known to legislation, and all the sinister influences

within the reach of an unscrupulous Executive. A grosser violation of all the requirements of honor—of all the safeguards and guarantees of republicanism—was seldom perpetrated.

This we shall show: and in the first place, let us remark, that the pretense by which the act was carried was fraudulent, a falsehood on the face of it, and designed only as a popular catch for the unreflecting. It purported to give the right of self-government to the people of the territories; but it did no such thing. It denied that right in the most important particulars, and mystified it so in others as to render it worthless. Nominally conceding the “non-intervention” of Congress in the local affairs of the territories, it yet intervenes in every form in which intervention is possible. It imposes the Governor and all other officers upon them; it prescribes unheard of oaths to the people; it restricts the suffrage; it places in the hands of the President and his agents, the power to mould the future character of the community; and it authorizes no legislation which is not subject, directly or indirectly, to the control of the fede-

ral government. The only non-intervention which it establishes, is the permission to introduce slavery into a district where it was before forbidden, and the transfer of legislative control, hitherto exercised by the representatives of the whole people, to a body of judges appointed by the Executive.

Secondly, this claim of absolute sovereignty for the people of the territories, is at war with our whole policy from the beginning, as well as with the most vital principles of just government. It was never contemplated by the framers of the Constitution, nor by the people of the States who ratified it, that the territories acquired under it should be placed upon a level with the original States. On the contrary, they were to be held in a state of pupilage, if we may so express it, under the control of Congress, until they should have acquired population and stability enough to manage their affairs for themselves. The idea of "squatter sovereignty," that a few accidental first-comers should determine the institutions of the future State, for all time, was one of the most offensive that could be uttered, and was

unanimously condemned by the great statesmen of both the North and South. They held, that if the whole people paid the expense of territorial acquisitions—whether by money or blood—if they were taxed for the support of their provisional governments; if they were liable for their defense against the aggressions of the bordering savages—then the whole people had also a right to a voice in their management. Taxation and representation must go together, said the Democracy; and this principle, we attest, is an older and better one than the miserable subterfuge of “non-intervention,” by which the demagogues of Congress hope to supplant it. “Non-intervention!” forsooth, which means that the people of the States shall bear all the burdens of the territories, but have no power to protect them from the passage of injurious and infamous laws. It means that the parent must be responsible for all the debts and deeds of his child, and yet be divested of all the authority of a parent. It means, in short, that the perpetrators of the iniquity wanted some delusive pretext, and that “non-intervention,”

with all its absurdities, was the best they could find.

Again : this bill in the method of its passage, nullified another fundamental principle of representative government, namely, that a representative is but the mouth-piece and organ of his constituents. Does anybody believe that, if the proposal to repeal the Missouri Compromise had been submitted to a direct vote of the people, that it would have commanded anywhere, north of Mason's and Dixon's line, a single majority in any district or township in any State ? Was there a solitary petition for it sent in from either North or South ? Was a single member of Congress, who voted for it, elected, with a view to such a question ? Were not the tables of both Senate and House laden with remonstrances against it, forwarded not by politicians, nor enthusiasts, but by the most sober and conservative citizens ? Did its friends, when challenged to do so, dare to postpone action upon it, for another year, until the people should be allowed to pass upon it ? Was it suffered to take its regular course in the progress of legislation ? No !

—no!—no! And yet we are told that ours is a representative government! A number of men, delegated for particular purposes to Washington, possessing not a particle of authority beyond that conferred upon them by the people, neglect the objects for which they were chosen, and proceed to accomplish other objects, which are not only not wished by their constituents, but are an outrage upon their sincerest and deepest convictions. Can we call them representatives? or, are they not rather usurpers, recreants, oligarchs, despots? What use is there in popular elections, when the persons chosen fancy themselves exempted from all responsibility, and go on to act in the most independent and arbitrary manner? It is true, they may be dismissed afterwards for their criminal breach of trust, as the barn-door may be locked after the horse is stolen; but then the mischief is already done. We may discharge a clerk who robs the till; but will that restore us our money? We may punish a seducer when he is caught; but is that a recompense to our violated honor? Not at all. What we want in legislation, as in other trusts,

are honest fiduciaries: men who will perform their duties according to our wishes, and not in pursuance of their own selfish objects; men who do not require to be watched at every step, and whose fidelity does not depend alone upon our ulterior privilege of breaking them when they have done wrong. A Congress of such men would be little better than an assemblage of cheats, and, for our parts, we should greatly prefer the rule of Nicholas, or Louis Napoleon, to their heterogeneous frauds and oppressions.

An open disregard of the will of the constituency is always a grave offense in a popular government, but how flagrant and unpardonable is it, when it is committed in furtherance of measures which look to the overthrow of popular liberty? Had the Nebraska bill been comparatively unexceptionable, had it contemplated some great and useful improvement or reform, there would even then have existed no excuse for the haste, the violence, and the audacity with which it was pressed to a vote; but when we reflect that its principal object was, to repeal a salutary ordinance against

the diffusion of a lamentable evil, we search in vain for words to express our feeling of the magnitude and malignity of the wrong. For nearly half a century those fertile regions of the West had rejoiced in their prospective exemption from the outrages of slavery. The American, and the foreigner, even, who rode over them, felt his heart dilate as he beheld in their rich fields the future home of an advancing and splendid civilization. He could already hear, in the rustle of the grasses, the hum of a prosperous industry; he saw magnificent cities rise on the borders of the streams, and pleasant villages dot the hills, and a flourishing commerce whiten the ripples of the lakes; the laugh of happy children came up to him from the corn-fields, and as the glow of the evening sun tinged the distant plains, a radiant and kindling vision floated upon its beams, of myriads of men, escaped from the tyrannies of the Old World, and gathered there in worshiping circles, to pour out their grateful hearts to God, for a redeemed and teeming earth. But, woe unto us now, this beautiful region, com-

pared with which the largest principalities of Europe are but pin-folds, nay, compared with which the most powerful existing empires are of trivial extent, is opened to the blight, the hopelessness, the desolation of a form of society which can never advance beyond a semi-barbarism, or whose highest achievement is a purchase of the wealth and freedom of one race, by the eternal subjection of another. Our vision of peaceful groups of free laborers is changed into the contemplation of black gangs of slaves. A single act of legislation, like Satan, when he entered Paradise, has reversed the destinies of a world. The fields seem to wither at its approach ; the waters dry up ; threatening clouds obscure the sky ; and

“ Nature, through all her works, gives signs of woe,
That all is lost.”

It has been esteemed the special privilege and glory of this young republic that her future was in her own hands. Born to no inheritance of wrong and sorrow, like the nations of the older continent, and with an existence as fresh and unsullied as the fame of a ripening maid-

en, it was supposed that she might see the states, which were soon to become the children of her family, growing up about her in prosperity, love, and vigor. She could watch over their cradles and keep them from harm; she could nourish them into manly strength; she could form them, by her wise and tender solicitude, to a career of exalted worth and greatness. A new page in the history of mankind appeared to be opened—a page unblotted by the blood-stains of tyranny, which mark the rubrics of the past, and destined to be written over only by the records of an ever-maturing nobleness and grandeur. This was the ambition of her fathers—of those who laid the beams of her habitation deep in the principles of virtuous freedom, and bequeathed to her the heroic precedent of single-hearted devotion to justice and right. But, alas, how are their hopes prostrated! Ere the first half century of her youth is passed, she finds herself not engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle for the preservation of her paternal acres, her unshorn and boundless prairies, from slavery, but yielding them, almost without reluctance, to the

fatal blight. When Niobe saw her fair sons and daughters falling under the swift darts of the angry gods, she wept herself to stone; but the genius of America—whom it is the pride of her sculptors to represent as wearing the Phrygian cap of liberty on her brow, and trampling upon broken chains with her feet, and bearing aloft the ægis of eternal justice—surrenders her children, without remorse, to death. She belies her symbols, she suppresses her inspirations; she opens the gates of the coming centuries to the advent of a remediless bondage

We are aware, it is often said, that slavery cannot be carried into the territories recently organized—that their soil and climate are not adapted to its support, and that the sole aim, in removing the restriction of the Missouri compromise, is to erase a distinction which the South regards as dishonoring, and unjust. It has, however, been sufficiently answered to this, that slavery thrives in Missouri, which is between nearly the same parallels of latitude, that Illinois, similarly situated, was only saved from it by a protracted and earnest struggle, and Indiana only by the immortal ordinance of

1787. But it is useless to adduce precedents and analogies in the face of current facts. The moment in which we write witnesses the proceedings of assemblages convened to keep free-emigration out of these territories by force of arms, if need be. Already slaveholders are on their way to establish themselves and their "institution" there, nay, they are already in possession of some of the choicest parts of the soil, and are resolved to maintain it, against all comers. Away, then, with the flimsy pretext that slavery is banned by what Mr. Webster called "the laws of God;" by natural position and circumstances! These, we admit, have much to do with the prevalence and strength of the system, but they are not omnipotent nor final—they are only accessory, either for it or against it; and the will of man—his determination to abide by the perennial principles of right, or to surrender them to a temporary and short-sighted spirit of gain—is what gives character, in this respect, to society. Nebraska and Kansas will be slave states if slaveholders go there, and they will be free states if freemen go there, and this is the long

and short of the matter, let the soil woo and the climate smile encouragement upon whom it pleases. If the American people do not now, on the instant, rescue those lands to freedom, it is in vain that they will hereafter look to nature or any other influences for their salvation.

We are, indeed, so far from being persuaded that it is not meant to take slavery into our new territories, that we begin to entertain the conviction, that the propagandists of the South will not stop even with the territories. It is imputed to them by authorities entitled to respect, that they cherish a policy which aims, not merely at its establishment within the limits of all the new states, but at the consolidation of it, by foreign conquests. We know that a movement has long been on foot in California for its legalization there ; we know that Texas is considered as the nucleus of three or four slaveholding sovereignties ; we know that schemes, open and secret, are prosecuted for the acquisition of Cuba, before Cuba shall have emancipated her blacks, as it is alleged she intends to do ; we know that eager, grasping eyes are

set on Mexico; we know that a Senator has called for the withdrawal of our naval squadron from the coast of Africa, that the slave-trade may be pursued in greater safety; we know that another Senator has broached the recognition of the Dominican Republic, with an ulterior view to its annexation; and we are told, that overtures have been made to Brazil, for coöperation in the ultimate establishment of a vast slaveholding confederacy to the South. Of course, some of these designs are still in the bud; they are not participated in by the judicious men of any section; but the remote conception of them should be monitory and waken us to vigilance. It is one of the dangers as well as glories of this nation, that its plans are executed with the rapidity of magnetism. A thought is scarcely a thought before it becomes a deed. We scorn delays; we strike and parley afterwards; we actualize the dreams of the old philosophers, and impart to our abstract ideas an instant creative energy. The fact, then, that such comprehensive schemes of pro-slavery expansion gain admittance into active minds, nay, that they are said

to burrow in those of men of eminent station, should beget a timely and jealous watchfulness against their least beginnings.

It is one of the arrangements of Providence, by which it tests the reality of our virtue, and punishes the want of it, that we should be so insensible to joint or corporate responsibilities, and yet so intimately connected with the tremendous good or evil consequences of their infringement. We are apt to suppose that the offenses of nations, against the laws of integrity and right, can be laid to no man's charge, or, rather, that the criminality of them is dissipated, through the multitude of the offenders, and we do not feel, in consenting or contributing to the commission of them, that we contract any degree of personal guilt. On the contrary, we undervalue them as offenses, and even laugh at the thought of national sins, as if they were chimeras, or the bodiless and impalpable acts of one, who, as the adage expresses it, has neither a body to be kicked nor a soul to damn. But, measured by their actual effects, by the awful reach and deathless vitality of their workings, these

national iniquities are they which are most to be struggled against, deprecated, dreaded. The evil done by a private individual spreads through a narrow circle only, and does not always live after him ; the contagion of its virus may be speedily counteracted, and the worst results of it often are no more than the debasement of a few other individuals. But the evil done by the public man, which is sanctioned by a corporate authority, which gets embodied into a wicked law, and to that extent becomes the deed of many, is augmented and multiplied, both in its criminality and consequences, by the number of wills which may be supposed to have concurred in its commission. Its powers of mischief are infinitely increased ; the potent enginery of the state is made its instrument ; its blasting influences spread, not only through a single community, but over vast races, and travel downward to the remotest time. It may arrest the movements of nations, paralyze the very fertility of the earth, and stun the heart of humanity for ages. The vices of single men are the diseases by which they themselves suffer and are broken, or at most by which they

communicate disease to those who come in contact with them; but the vices of states are a malaria which blisters in the air and festers in the soil, and sweeps away millions to the tomb.

Oh! how much of good may be done, or of evil prevented, by a little timely legislation. When Tiberius Gracchus, traveling through Italy, to join the army in Spain, saw how the multitude of his countrymen were impoverished and their fields laid desolate by the existence of slavery, he proposed to terminate its evils, and scatter the clouds of disaster that had already begun to gather and brood over the destinies of the Roman commonwealth, by a simple, just, and practicable law which should build up, in the midst of the luxurious Roman nobles and their debased slaves, an independent Roman yeomanry. He perceived that the public domain, long usurped by the Patricians, if appropriated to the people, would prevent the concentration of wealth, and stimulate the pride and industrial energies of the almost hopeless people; and, had his project been carried, he would have arrested the downward career of his country, and perpetuated for centuries,

doubtless, the early Roman virtue, which still seems marvelous to us in its dignity and force. But the designs of Gracchus were defeated by his murder; the Patricians triumphed; the people grew poorer and corrupter, till they were at last fed like paupers from the public granaries; alternate insurrections of slaves swept the state like a whirlwind; despots like Sylla, and demagogues like Marius, convulsed society by civil wars; and, finally, the tyrant Cæsar arose to reap the harvest of previous distractions, and, as the only salvation from profounder miseries, to erect on the ruins of the Republic an irresponsible monarchy.*

We have dwelt upon the proceedings of the pro-slavery party so long, that we have left ourselves little space for urging upon other parties their duties in the crisis. But we will not speak to them as parties. We will say to them as Americans, as freemen, as Christians, that

* This historical allusion, suggested to the writer by a perusal of Michelet's Roman Republic, has occurred also to Mr. Bancroft in his splendid essay on Slavery as the cause of the downfall of the Roman Republic. See Bancroft's Miscellanies, page 280, "On the Decline of the Roman People."

the time has arrived when all divisions and animosities should be laid aside, in order to to rescue this great, this beautiful, this glorious land from a hateful domination. As it now is, no man who expresses, however moderately, a free opinion of the slave-system of the South, is allowed to hold any office of profit or trust under the General Government. No man can be President, no man a foreign minister, no man a tide-waiter, even, or the meanest scullion in the federal kitchen, who has not first bowed down and eaten the dirt of adherence to slavery. Oh! shameless debasement—that under a Union formed for the establishment of liberty and justice—under a Union born of the agonies and cemented by the blood of our parents—a Union whose mission it was to set an example of republican freedom, and commend it to the panting nations of the world—we freemen of the United States should be suffocated by politicians into a silent acquiescence with despotism! That we should not dare to utter the words or breathe the aspirations of our fathers, or propagate their principles, on pain of ostracism and political death! Just Heaven! into

what depths of infamy and insensibility have we fallen !

We repeat, that until the sentiment of slavery is driven back to its original bounds, to the states to which it legitimately belongs, the people of the North are vassals. Yet their emancipation is practicable, if not easy. They have only to evince a determination to be free, and they are free. They are to discard all past alliances, to put aside all present fears, to dread no future coalitions, in the single hope of carrying to speedy victory a banner inscribed with these devices :—THE REPEAL OF THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW—THE RESTORATION OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE—NO MORE SLAVE STATES—NO MORE SLAVE TERRITORIES—THE HOMESTEAD FOR FREE MEN ON THE PUBLIC LANDS.

SEPTEMBER, 1854.

It is proper to add, to render the views of this article complete, that the multiplied outrages and aggressions of the Slavery Party, have compelled a fusion of the more honest and conscientious adherents of the old parties, into a new party called the Republican, which has not

adopted the standard of principles we have recommended in the last paragraph, but satisfied itself with the simple device of no more Slave Territories and no more Slave States. That is sufficient—and the standard-bearer who has been selected to conduct its fortunes, during the next presidential campaign, is Fremont, the adventurous Pathfinder of the Rocky Mountains, and the gallant conqueror and liberator of California.

JULY, 1856.

THE VESTIGES OF DESPOTISM.*

WE remember, in crossing the British Channel once, that we had taken with us an odd number of *Punch*, to while away the tediousness of the passage. On landing at Boulogne, it was crammed into a side pocket for safety, but the gendarme, who inspected travelers' luggage, seeing the paper, tore it into a thousand pieces before our face, looking as fierce as a pandoor all the time, and repeating, "*Il est defendu, monsieur !*" It seemed that *Punch* had been in the habit of drawing a small man with a big nose, which Louis Napoleon took for himself—this was before he and Victoria shook hands and kissed—and he avenged the indignity by excluding *Punch* from the republic. Again, subsequently, on entering Vienna, we had a *London Morning Chronicle* sequestered in

* It is proper to remark, in order to explain some allusions at the close, that this article was suggested by the violent abuse which followed upon the publication of the foregoing article, in *Putnam's Magazine*.

the same manner because it contained some account of the progress of Kossuth in the United States ; and a friend of ours, not long after, crossing the Po, from Austrian Italy into the Estates of the Church, had his Bible taken away, though copies of Voltaire's naughty *Candide*, and Byron's naughtier *Don Juan*, were left untouched in his carpet-bag.

These were specimens of European despotism, and we thanked God that no such petty interferences with the rights of men were permitted in our own dear land beyond the sea. A man, we said to ourselves proudly, may read what he pleases there, never saying, "by your leave," to any emperor, priest, or catchpoll of them all. The press is free, opinion is free, locomotion is free ; and the wayfarer, though a stranger, may think his own thoughts, say his own say, and be happy or miserable, as he likes, without let or molestation from his neighbors or the government. Hail Columbia ! we exclaimed, in a fit of patriotic enthusiasm ; home of the exile, asylum of the oppressed, refuge of the gagged and persecuted, etc., etc., etc. "Where the free spirit of mankind, at

length, throws its last fetters off;" where a boundless field is open for every seed of truth to germinate; where an unlimited career is proffered to the excursions of the mind; where no tyrant, no creed, no church lays its heavy interdict upon the growth of human thought; Hail, thou latest born of time; mighty in thy youth; chainless and unchained; "gleaming in the blaze of sunrise when earth is wrapped in gloom." Oh, mayest thou long be proud and worthy of thy glorious dower!

But calmer reflection taught us to inquire, after a time, whether our patriotism, taking the bit in its mouth, had not been running away with our reason. Is it true, we asked, that there is no despotism in America? Have we no authorities, which take the control of opinion, and assume to be infallible? Are there no institutions, no tribunals, no self-constituted judges, which impose injurious restraints upon the freedom of thought? Have we extinguished the spirit and habit of persecution along with its outward symbols—the rack, the stake, the dungeon and the prison-house? We answered ourselves in this wise: We do not, it

must be confessed, resort to the same compulsory methods against the human understanding as obtained in former ages, and still obtain, in some countries. We do not stretch the limbs of men on instruments of torture, because they refuse to conform to this or that standard of incomprehensible dogmas ; we do not pillory our poor De Foes, for the crime of writing candidly on public affairs, nor imprison our humble Bunyans for proclaiming the gospel in the streets ; we do not bury our statesmen under the sea as they do in Naples ; we do not banish our most illustrious artists and poets, because they are liberals, to the wild swamps of Cayenne, as they do in France : all this must be confessed, and it must be confessed, too, that these are noble advantages to have achieved over the spirit of intolerance. No one can over-estimate their worth and glory. They are priceless victories won from the old empire of darkness. They lift us into a security and elevation which baffle for ever the malice of a whole infernal brood of serpents, who may now hiss about the rock of our retreat, but cannot sting us to death.

Yet it appears upon minuter consideration, that if the advanced civilization of our country rejects the grosser applications of force by which opinion was wont to be controlled, there are others which are not entirely discontinued. A less barbarous, a more refined tyranny is compatible with this general sense of propriety and justice. There are chains which men forge for their fellows, that fret and cut their souls, if they do not canker their bodies. There are inquisitions of obloquy and hatred which may succeed to inquisitions of the fagot and flame. There is a moral coventry almost as humiliating and oppressive as the stern solitude of the dungeon. The spirit of bigotry may survive the destruction of its carnal weapons; despotism may retain its instincts, and give vigorous signs of vitality, long after the sword shall have been wrenched from its grasp; and the fires of hell may burn in the eyes of bigotry when they have already ceased to burn upon its altars. For what is the essential and distinctive characteristic of despotism? Not its outward instruments,—its Bastiles, its gibbets, its bayonets, its knouts, and its thumb-screws—but its animat-

ing purpose. It is the disposition to suppress the free formation and publication of opinion, by other means than those by which the mind is logically moved—by other influences than motives addressed to the understanding, the reason, and the better feelings of the heart. Wherever a man's bread is taken away because he votes with this party or that, wherever he is denounced to public odium because of the heterodoxy of his honest sentiments, wherever moral turpitude is imputed to him on account of his speculative errors, wherever he is in terror of the mob on any account, wherever the inveteracy of public prejudice compels him to remain silent altogether, or to live a life of perpetual hypocrisy, wherever his sincere convictions can not be disclosed and promulged for fear of personal discomfiture and annoyance, wherever even a limit is fixed to the progress of research, there despotism flourishes, with more or less strength, and only needs the concurrence of circumstances to be nursed into muscular violence and fury.

Now, as we have said, it seems to us that, tried by this test, we have despotisms in the

United States, just as they have elsewhere, and, that with all our advances in liberality of which we justly boast, we come short in practice of the brilliant ideal of our institutions. We have not attained to a genuine and universal liberty—(we will not say *tolerance*, because that word is borrowed from an age when freedom was supposed to be a boon and not a right)—and we fail not in one or two, but in many respects. In the Church, in the State, in the popular meeting, and in the more private relations of society, we often surround ourselves with needless barriers, we build walls of separation between ourselves and the great realms of intelligence yet unexplored, and we paralyze those intellectual energies which are our only instruments for exploring them, the only tools for working the golden mines of truth.

In the first place, we cannot but consider a large number of our ecclesiastical organizations as so many restraints upon the freedom of the mind. Founded upon creeds which admit of no possibility of truth beyond their own formulas, they discourage inquiry in the largest and most important domains of thought. Kant,

the great German philosopher, in one of his valuable minor writings, discussing the question whether any association is justified in binding itself to certain immutable articles of faith, in order to exercise a perpetual and supreme guardianship over its members, and indirectly through them over the people, contends that a compact of this kind, entered into, not as a simple bond of union for the interchange of common sentiments, but with a view to conclude the human race from further enlightenment, is a crime against humanity, whose highest destination consists emphatically in intellectual progress. "A combination," says he, "to maintain an unalterable religious system, which no man is permitted to call in doubt, would, even for the term of one man's life, be wholly intolerable. It would be, as it were, to blot out one generation in the progress of the human species towards a better condition; to render it barren and hence noxious to posterity." This conduct, in the religious world, proceeds upon the assumption that our knowledge of divine things cannot advance like our knowledge of natural things; that the first investigators of

the Scriptures exhausted their contents, and that nothing is left for those that come after them, but, as Johnson says of the followers of Shakespeare, to new-name their characters and repeat their phrases. But does this view do justice to the sacred word? Granting that its leading principles may be easily discerned—a thing difficult to grant in the face of two hundred conflicting sects, each of which finds its support and nutriment in the same pages; for, as Sir William Hamilton is fond of quoting,

“This is the book where each his dogma seeks,
And this the book where each his dogma finds,”*

—we must still suppose, that a revelation from the Infinite will contain infinite resources of truth. Neither its alleged origin, which is from the perfect God, nor its alleged destiny, which is the final redemption of mankind from error, will allow us for a moment to treat it as an ordinary message, soon told, and as speedily comprehended. It must conceal inexhaustible riches, or not be what it purports; while to suppose it to be what it purports, and yet to

* “*Hic liber est in quo quærit sua dogmata quisque,
Invenit, et pariter dogmata quisque sua.*”

attempt to inclose its treasures in the frail and rickety caskets of words which men devise, is an enterprise for pouring the ocean into a quart-pot, or for bottling the air of the whole heavens in one's private cellar. Nor is the attempt less pernicious than it is absurd: for it erects each little consistory into a separate popedom, issuing its infallible decrees and denouncing its interdicts with all the arrogance of its Roman prototype. As an inevitable consequence, two things result; firstly, that the supreme control of the religious sentiment of nations falls into the hands of the priesthood, who are conservative by position and training,—and, secondly, that the energies of the churches are absorbed in controversy or sectarian propagation, at the expense of a free and earnest inquiry after new truth, and the culture of the more genial and hopeful feelings. The history of our American sects, for instance, is an almost unbroken record of fierce and bigoted disputes. New England has been a kind of theological Golgotha, and the fields are covered with battered skulls. The clergy have been the ruling powers there, and the people have

dared to laugh only with the consent of the deacons. We are aware that this aspect of things has materially changed of late years; we know, also, what inappreciable services the churches have otherwise rendered to society; but we must not forget, in the midst of our ready gratitude for these, how many of them, by means of their creeds, and the terrors of their^r forms and excommunications, still hang as an incubus upon the minds and consciences of their adherents. Nor upon them alone, but upon many others—even upon those who do not professedly wear their colors. They too often terrify the ardent reformer, whose bright hopes they change by the magic of fear into dread spectres; they too often arrest the uplifted arm of science when it would strike from the rock, or open out from the bowels of the earth, some precious fountain of use;—and they too often array themselves on the side of effete traditions and mouldy abuses, when they should be pressing forward under the ever-living inspirations of hope and freedom.

It is said that Justinian, when he had completed the compilation of his Institutes,

issued a decree that no comment should be written upon them, which aimed at more than a sketch of their contents, or a transcription of their titles; and it is true of most sects that they try to copy this imperial and arbitrary example. They impose on others, as exclusively right and authoritative, their own slender selections out of the vast complexity of truths—the few pearls they have fished out of the measureless sea—fancying that they have banished error, when they have only extinguished the independence of thought. Indeed, it is scarcely too much to attest, appropriating the figure of Mirabeau, where he compares truth to the statue of Isis covered by many veils, that they teach their followers to lift a single one, whilst they fling their clubs and battleaxes at the heads of all who would remove the others. “*Procul, oh! procul, esti profani!*” rings the chorus, and the poor audacious “infidel”—as every dissentient is sure to be called—is handed over to an everlasting contempt. Now, what chance truth has in such a hubbub it is needless to inquire.

We recognize, secondly, an oppressive exer-

cise of despotic power, in the conduct of political parties, both in respect to the violence, and bitterness of their hatreds, and the relentless proscriptions which crown their victories. The former are, perhaps, not to be avoided in the present imperfect state of enlightenment and Christianity; but the second are wholly indefensible anywhere, and especially in a republican society. The primary, essential, distinctive right of man, in a free state, which rests upon popular choice, is the right of election, and to assail that right, by direct or indirect means, by force of arms or by the abstraction from one of his subsistence, is treason against the fundamental principles of democracy—it is a *lèse-majesté* done to the people. Yet, all our political parties justify themselves in a wholesale political slaughter of their opponents, whenever they come into power. Like those tribes in Africa, which sacrifice a hundred or two of men every time a new prince ascends the throne, though they confine the immolation to the leaders only of their enemies, our whigs and democrats, on the occasion of their advents to power, butcher all the opposing

chiefs, and all the subordinate functionaries, down to the drill-sergeant and the sutler. And, like William the Norman, when he conquered England, they distribute all the lands and mesuages of the vanquished to their own set. A regular Domesday-book is opened, and the fiefs and holdings are parceled out with a coolness of effrontery, which almost persuades us that the perpetrators of the outrage are unconscious of its monstrous meanness.

This is an injustice which, however, works the usual effects of despotism. It degrades the character of all who are concerned in it; reducing political life into the sheerest scramble for spoils, and bringing the suspicion of mercenariness upon every man who takes office. In either aspect, the practice is signally disastrous. By debasing the standard of official eligibility, it places in high position men of corrupting and pernicious example, and, by relaxing the tone of public controversy, it saps and undermines the integrity of the people. No service which government renders to society is more important than its influence in preserving a sense of the general good as superior to in-

dividual interests. Indeed, this may be regarded as one of its finest functions—the education of the masses into a perception of the supremacy of the general over particular ends. Our natural impulses, our family ties, our necessities of business, tend towards the development of a comparatively selfish egotism, which our participation in public affairs tends to counteract. But, if that participation, instead of being animated by a sense of devotion to the public good, is converted into an intense struggle for the accomplishment of individual purposes, we lose one of the most salutary restraints, one of the noblest inspirations of the civilized state. We resolve society into what Hobbs contended was its original condition—a state of war. We confirm the multitude in their narrow and low ambitions; and we restrict their actions to the petty circle of their own private and individual concerns.

Again; the examples of really great statesmen are among the most precious and indestructible inheritances of a nation. No matter how great their services in averting dangers from the commonwealth, or in achieving ad-

vantages for it, by the direct exercise of their faculties, these cannot be compared with their indirect utility, in presenting to the people a high, manly, dignified, and heroic ideal of devotion to the public weal. Their life-long abnegation of self, their cautious wisdom, their moderation of temper, the spectacle of their constant preference of a broad and ultimate good to local expedients and temporary triumphs, habituate the general mind to the contemplation of lofty ends and models of excellence in conduct. Who can doubt that the characters of Washington, of Franklin, of Marshall, of Madison, etc., have been infinitely more valuable to us Americans than any battles they may have won in the field, or the forum? They have been so, because they have filled our histories with pictures of a disinterested virtue. But such characters are not possible in public life, when that life is no longer a contest of great minds for great ends, but a pot-house squabble—when the despotism of party machinery excludes from public service every man who is not sufficiently base to stoop to its arts, and to roll in its ordure. Do

we not, by our party intolerance, then by the proscriptions which tread upon the heels of every success, rob the community of a twofold guaranty of its progress, of the services of its best men, and of a high moral tone of public sentiment?

But this leads us to the third species of despotism which we think it important to note, and which, instigated by the bad examples of both church and state, may be described as that of popular opinion. We do not agree with those foreign writers who represent the tyranny of the majority in this country as absolutely terrific: they have exaggerated its effects; yet their criticisms are not without a tincture of truth. Compared with the older nations, there is a larger freedom of opinion on most subjects in this country, than anywhere else on the globe; but, compared with our own standards, or the ideals of our institutions, we are on manifold subjects lamentably deficient. It is natural, in a society whose stability depends as much upon opinion as upon law, and more upon opinion than force, that opinion, like other powers, should occasionally play the despot.

What we complain of, however, is not the habitual watchfulness of the public mind over public interests, and its chronic tendency to rectify abuses, or to avert evil by an instant insurrection, but the excessive resentment of it when provoked. It is that unwillingness to be corrected which makes its thought rather a prejudice than an opinion—that tenacity with which it clings to its customary formulas—and the severity with which it often resists even the slightest departures from them. We complain of it because it erects the majority into an idol, a monarch, a tyrant, and begets a deference to it which is almost as bad as any savage superstition or loyal sycophancy. It weakens the very springs of character in men, and then lords it over their weakness with an irresponsible violence and outrage. Take, for instance, the pro-slavery sentiment of this country, as it prevailed a few years ago—how arbitrary, ferocious, and overwhelming it was! Not merely in the South, where the vast interests involved, and the peace and security of society itself justify an extraordinary sensitiveness towards all impertinent interference, but

throughout the nation, where no such exigencies of danger can be alleged. In the most secluded districts of New England, even, where a black slave was never seen, and thousands of miles away from where they are, the expression of anti-slavery views has been almost a courting of martyrdom. The feeling dominated the church, the senate, the popular assembly, and the private saloon. Let a preacher plead the cause of the negroes, and his salary was stopped; let a newspaper attempt the discussion of the subject, and it lost its subscribers; let a representative broach it in Congress, and he was gagged and excluded from the Committees, or politely invited to fight a duel. Public meetings called to consider it were dispersed by the mob; petitions to the Federal Legislature against it were indignantly trampled under foot; the United States mails were feloniously invaded in its behalf—while the agents of anti-slavery societies were coated with tar and feathers, or mutilated, or hung upon a tree. It is true that all this has been since changed, but by means of what sufferings, what struggles, what strenuous and long-continued combats!

Even at this time, the pro-slavery sentiment is so largely in the ascendant, that no man of the most moderate anti-slavery convictions can hold office under the Federal Government—though that government represents, or ought to represent, not a faction or a locality, but the whole people.

De Tocqueville makes it an accusation against democratic societies, that they substitute a many-headed tyranny for that of a single man or of a single class, and the history of the anti-slavery controversy in this country, to our shame be it said, forces us to confess that, in this respect at least, his remarks are well grounded. “Fetters and headsmen,” he exclaims, “were the coarse instruments which tyranny formerly employed ; but the civilization of our age has refined the arts of despotism, which seemed, however, to be sufficiently protected before ; the excesses of monarchical power have devised a variety of physical means of oppression ; the democratic republics of the present day have rendered it as entirely an affair of the mind as that will which it is intended to coerce. Under the absolute sway of an individual despot, the

body was attacked in order to subdue the soul ; and the soul escaped the blows which were directed against it, and rose superior to the attempt ; but such is not the course adopted by the tyranny in democratic republics ; there the body is left free and the soul is enslaved. The sovereign can no longer say, “ You shall think as I do on pain of death,” but he says, “ You are free to think differently from me and retain your life, your property, and all that you possess ; but if such be your determination, you are henceforth an alien amongst your people : you may retain your civil rights, but they will be useless to you, for you will never be chosen by your fellow-citizens, if you solicit their suffrages ; and they will affect to scorn you, if you solicit their esteem. You will remain among men, but you will be deprived of the rights of mankind. Your fellow-citizens will shun you like an impure being ; and those who are most persuaded of your innocence will abandon you, too, lest they should be shunned in their turn. Go in peace ! I have given you your life, but it is an existence incomparably worse than death.” There are, however, two fal-

lacies in this—first, in supposing that the social proscription alluded to could subsist without passing over into muscular violence; and, second, in the implication that the soul is less likely to rise superior to moral than to physical persecutions. The experience of this country has proved the contrary of both. It has shown how the virulence of prejudice soon runs into lynchings and mob-law, whence its peculiar dangers; and it has shown, at the same time, by the reactions of the last few years, how effectively the most overbearing majorities may be resisted. Yet, as we have already acknowledged, there is a basis of truth in De Tocqueville's animated charges, as might be amply demonstrated from the long, arrogant, insulting, and rancorous preponderance of the pro-slavery sentiment.

But this sentiment has grown out of the existence of slavery itself, the last kind of despotism to which we shall allude. It is needless to remark upon its character as such, beyond the statement of the simple fact that four millions of human beings are held as property, which settles that point with an em-

phasis. From its very nature, it is a despotism of force, of law, and of opinion combined—partially mitigated in practice by humane personal considerations, but in theory absolute. It is administered, for the most part, by the whip; it is sanctioned by legislation; and it admits of no scrutiny or discussion. The master and the slave, therefore, are alike dominated by the system. All that can be said of it, in the regions where it prevails, even by those most deeply interested in its results, must be said in its favor, on pain of peremptory banishment or assassination. Indeed the illusions as to its benefits and the sensitiveness as to its dangers, are both so extreme, that many a slaveholder allows himself to read no book nor to hear any conversation in which his positive, unqualified, eternal right is disputed. What a pitiable and insane extravagance! And, if he were consistent, to what a total intellectual solitude would he be reduced, in the present state of the civilized world. He would cut himself off from all the literature, and science, and politics of mankind. He could read no magazines, foreign or domestic; the

best works of genius would be closed to him ; the investigations of science grow infectious ; and the debates of Congress intolerable. In fact there would be no resource for the class who institute this moral quarantine, but to imitate the habits of the chigo, as it is described by Sydney Smith, where he says that each one sets up its separate ulcer, and has his own private portion of pus.

One would suppose that under the tremendous responsibilities of its condition, and the embarrassing perplexity of the problem it is called to solve, it would welcome every honest suggestion likely to throw light upon the case, and even court that collision of opinion out of which the truth is gradually struck. But it does no such thing ; it repels every approach as an insolence and an invasion of its rights : and blindly surrenders itself to the darkness of fate. It is fortunate that all slaveholders are not of the same temper, that there are men among them too liberal and intelligent to fall into such unreasoning bigotry, who, on the contrary, study with an intense solicitude the bearings of their social structure, and eagerly

seize upon every view of it which may afford them hope for the future. It is to them that we look for the wise management of their fearful trusts, and the eventual extinction of what they must confess to be a most undesirable relation. They are as yet sadly overborne by the pressure of opinions instigated by interest, but will soon acquire a strength which will place the control of events in their hands.

Now, in respect to the several forms of despotism which we have briefly enumerated, we shall not dwell upon their radical inconsistency with the life and spirit of our entire polity; for this consideration is too obvious to require pressing. Nor is there any occasion, now, to show the inherent weakness of any cause, or position, which shrinks from the fullest and fairest examination. But we cannot forbear remarking upon the deep and abiding injury which every man, who is unwilling to bring his actions or his sentiments to the test of scrutiny, does to himself, and the rest of mankind. He shuts himself and society out from the only means of correcting error and attaining knowledge. We know of no method

of arriving at the true relations of a subject, but the frank and candid discussion of it in every aspect. The time is past for believing in the existence of any infallible authority, whether pope or king, whose decrees are to be considered the final arbitrament of truth. There is no class or rank of men to whom we may look for a fixed and irrevocable standard of what it is right to think or proper to do. Our individual judgments are contracted, uncertain, warped by prejudices; and the more profoundly we have penetrated into the complex problems of life which solicit solution, the more familiar we become with the vast extent and variety of human error, the more distrustful we grow of the authenticity and correctness of our own decisions. Yet, in the midst of the almost overwhelming multiplicity of crude and preposterous speculations, in the wild chaos of conflicting beliefs which storm around us, we do discover that the general mind is slowly eliminating one truth after another; the immense laboratory of seething and fermenting thought is ever turning up some valuable and brilliant product; and keen research and grap-

pling argument secure us substantial conquests from the realms of ancient night. Discussion—free, open, manly, patient discussion—is the key which opens the treasure-chambers of nature and revelation, and the deep human soul. Like the cradles of the Californians, it sifts the golden metal from the common filth and dust. Summoning every variety of intellectual instruments to its aid, contemplating things in all their aspects, exposing falsehoods, detecting fraud, baffling selfishness, overwhelming ignorance, and rectifying hallucination, it opens the way for the slow but majestic and beneficent march of the human intellect towards the mastery of the world.

No sensible man will now dispute the gigantic advances which the civilized races have made in the various departments of mathematical and physical science, since they were committed to the hands of free inquirers, nor wish to revert to those political institutions and religious scruples by which their progress was so long fettered. Would it be less absurd to despair of the speedy success of the moral and political science, if they were once emancipat-

ed from the despotisms by which they are checked? The very triumphs of the former sciences are a ground of hope for the rapid and extensive improvement of the latter, when these shall have adopted the methods and be prosecuted in the spirit of those. “The practice of rejecting mere gratuitous hypotheses,” says the able author of “The Letters of an Egyptian Kafir,” “of demanding facts, of requiring every step of reasoning to be clearly exhibited, of looking with perfect precision to the use of terms, of discarding rhetorical illusions, and mere phrases, of scouting pretensions to infallibility, or exemption from rigorous scrutiny, are all required as indispensable in physical research, but cannot possibly be confined to the department of material philosophy. They will necessarily be extended to moral inquiries; and, supposing that, in consequence of social proscription, or priestly or political tyranny, these latter subjects were totally abandoned, received no direct examination, were exposed to no discussion for even a long period, were withheld (if we can conceive it possible) from the very thoughts of men,

for half a century, yet the influence of physical investigation upon them could not, in the end, be prevented. All the correct principles of reasoning, all the improved methods of research, all the habits of comparison and discrimination, all the love of truth, which the pursuit of any science has a tendency to establish or engender, all the impatience of vagueness, and obscurity, and assumption, which the prosecution of inquiry superinduces in the spirit of men, would gather round the prohibited subjects, ready, like hungry lions, to rush on what they had been withheld from, by the bars and chains and bolts of social or political despotism.”

With the admonitions of that paragraph, which we commend to all in the United States, who wish to obstruct the advances of opinion, on any subject, we dismiss our theme.

Before quitting it entirely, however, let us add that we have been drawn to it by criticisms that we have seen, from time to time, passed upon the conduct of this magazine. A feeling of surprise has sometimes been expressed that we should mingle with our lighter en-

tertainments grave and thoughtful considerations of the leading political, social, scientific, and religious topics of the day. But, surely they who express that feeling can neither have studied our course from the beginning, nor have thoroughly digested in their own minds the proper aims and duties of a first-class periodical. It was never our intention to issue a monthly exclusively for the milliners ; we had no ambition to institute a monopoly manufacture of love-tales and sing-song verses ; and, if we had, we should have despaired of success amid the brilliant successes already achieved in that line. No ! we had other conceptions of the variety, the importance, the dignity, and the destiny of literature. Our thought, in establishing this enterprise, was, and it still is, that literature is the full and free expression of the nation's mind, not in *belles-lettres* alone, nor in art alone, nor in science alone, but in all these, combined with politics and religion. It seemed to us, that the cultivated men, the literary men of a nation, are among its best instructors, and that they feebly discharge their function, if they are not free to utter their

wisest thoughts, their most beautiful inspirations, on every subject which concerns the interests, the sensibilities, and the hopes of our humanity. Whether they pour forth their sense of beauty, grace, and gentleness in strains of poetry, or enlarge our knowledge of man in sketches of travel, or bring nearer to us the countless charms of our landscapes by natural descriptions, or help us to a clearer conception of great characters in biographic notices, or lift the disposition into cheerfulness and buoyancy by outgushings of humor, or refine our views of life and happiness by ideal portraiture, or expose pretension, arrogance, and folly, by caustic satire, or unfold the magnificent vistas of science, or canvass the movements of parties and the measures of government in the light of great general principles,—they still belong to that higher priesthood, whose ministrations emancipate us from the care and littleness of daily life, who enkindle in us the love of the loveliest things, who reveal the depths of our spirits, and “whose voices come down from the kingdom of God.” But in order to the true manifestations of this

exalted character, a free scope must be given to the action of their genius; and such we trust they will ever find in the pages of this Monthly.

Figaro says that he once conceived the project of setting up a journal, and that when he applied to the government for the necessary permit, they accepted his scheme with the warmest applause. "It will be a capital, excellent thing," said they; "and provided you never touch upon religion, nor politics, nor private society, nor the affairs of the opera, and submit each article to the decision of three censors, it shall receive our heartiest concurrence!"

"Whereupon," adds Figaro, "finding that the best name for it would be *Le Journal Inutile*, I concluded to drop the enterprise." As for ourselves, we have no desire to publish a "useless journal," and if we cannot "say our say" of what is passing, or, if we must cultivate the wonderful art by which politicians talk for a month without saying anything, we shall imitate the discretion of Figaro, and hasten to other fields of labor.

NOVEMBER, 1854.

OUR FOREIGN INFLUENCE AND POLICY.

THERE are fifty thousand villages, more or less, in the United States, in each of which an oration is delivered on the 4th of July, and the orator who delivers it, when he comes to exhort his fellow-citizens on the greatness of their responsibilities, says, invariably and solemnly, “the eyes of the world are upon us!” It would seem to be a pretty general conviction—among orators, at least—that the people of the universe have very little else to do than to watch the movements of Brother Jonathan.

The same thought is implied in the frequent remark, which we hear, that it is our duty, as a nation, to teach mankind the way of republican righteousness, by the beneficent influence of our example. When a late distinguished senator, who, with all his genius and virtue,

was somewhat given to commonplace, eloquently admonished Kossuth on the wickedness of his designs against our national virtue, he observed, with manifest seriousness and sincerity, that there was no need of our interfering in European affairs, because Europe could be better reached by "the silent influence of our great republican example."

Now, it is unpleasant at any time to take the conceit out of a man, and to show that he is by no means so stupendous a creature as he fondly imagines. Nor is it any more agreeable to run counter to the self-complacency of a nation, or to feel obliged to say to it, in all honesty and truth, that it is not so magnificent a swell as its fancy paints it, or its flatterers represent; yet, as we do not share the conviction of many of our countrymen as to the tremendous and egregious figure they cut in the eyes of mankind, we are forced to tell them as much, and, without wishing to abate one jot of the just estimate they may have formed of their growing power and greatness, to explain frankly the grounds of our unpatriotic heresy.

We do not wish to deny the almost miracu-

lous growth of the people of the United States, in all the elements of national strength and grandeur. On the contrary, we are as proud as any Fourth of July orator can be, of those beneficent free institutions, which have raised us, in the course of half a century, from comparative nothingness, into the first rank of nations. We glory in our success, not simply because it is success, nor because it flatters our patriotic instincts, but because it demonstrates, for the benefit of mankind, as well as of ourselves, the truth and benevolent efficacy of the democratic theory of government. But the question before us is not what we are in ourselves, nor what we have proved to ourselves, but what we have accomplished abroad, the interest the world takes in us, or more particularly, the opinion they entertain of us in Europe.

The United States are variously estimated in Europe by different classes of men. Statesmen, by the necessities of their profession, have a more or less familiar acquaintance with the workings of our governments, or with the statistics of our physical development. They

know the number of our people, and the spirit that animates them; they know the general character and ability of our rulers; they know our popular ambitions; but, with all this, they know little of our real, solid strength. They under-estimate our integrity as a nation. Many of them momentarily expect that the Union will fall to pieces, or that, in a few years, our society will be plunged into the horrors of a servile and civil war. Others allege that we are immersed in the pursuit of gain, without inherent unity and elevation of spirit, and too essentially weak to stand the shocks of adversity and war. While others, again, suppose that the insane avidity of conquest, which they say is an inseparable characteristic of democratic states, will impel us to one foreign aggression after another, until our territory shall have become too unwieldy for management. Thus, the statesmen of Europe, with inconsiderable exceptions, trained in monarchical theories, distrustful of the people, beholding in democratic extension only a lust for empire, and not a peaceful progress, surround the future of the young republic with dangers, and

shut their eyes to the real significance of her history. Can they, then, be said to know the actual condition of our affairs?

Unfortunately, the persons we send abroad, as representatives, our ministers and chargés, who, in virtue of their office, come in contact with the political classes, do nothing to enlarge the opinions held of us abroad, when inadequate, and nothing to correct them, when erroneous. Selected less on account of their fitness for their places, than because of the partisan services they may have rendered, they are, for the most part, men conspicuously unfit for their positions—ignorant of the language of courts; ignorant of the laws of good manners; ignorant of the history of diplomacy; ignorant of the commercial relations of nations, and, of course, ignorant of their own country. Or, if they be not so fatally deficient of capacity or character as we have described, they carry abroad with them the vilest spirit of the tuft-hunter and the sycophant. All their ambition seems to be to circulate in good society; to dine with distinguished ministers, and to hob-nob with princes and dukes. A favor from a king quite upsets

their understanding. We remember to have met once, in Italy, not a thousand years ago, an American ambassador, whose whole talk related to the eminent virtue and wisdom of the present weak and perjured king of Prussia, whom he extolled as a pattern of every domestic excellence, and a model among rulers. No court lacquey, with a red embroidered coat on his back, could have cherished a profounder regard for that monarch, or expressed his admiration in more unmeasured praises. Yet this eulogist of royalty was, perhaps, better than a predecessor of his, who had befouled his legation with the vices of the debauchee and the drunkard. He was an exception, it is true, and regarded by a majority of his colleagues as a disgrace to the nation; but one such example of an American diplomatist, in the course of twenty years, spreads more prejudice against us, and against the cause of republicanism, than fifty years of "the silent influence of example" can neutralize.

Next to statesmen, the readers of the more intelligent books about the United States, like those of De Tocqueville, Chevalier, Van Beau-

mer, and Miss Martineau, acquire some knowledge of us, and our concerns, but not on the whole an accurate or complete knowledge. The writers of those works we believe to have been honest, they conducted their inquiries with a desire to discover the truth, have stated the results fairly, and in many respects have presented faithful, as well as important views, either of our manners or policy. De Tocqueville's work, in particular, is characterized by a patient study of facts, and fine philosophical generalizations, but it is, after all, superficial, abounding in political as well as politico-economical mistakes, and inspiring a distrust of democracy, in the midst of all its apparent eulogies. But, if these were more satisfactory, they could do little towards informing public opinion, against the host of others, of inferior calibre—the Trollopes, Marryatts, and Dickens-es, whose narratives of travel are little better than caricatures. Where one copy of the more dignified and stately work of De Tocqueville is read, thousands of Dickens's "Notes" are circulated to counteract it; or, where the latter do not penetrate, the newspapers, published in

the interests of despotism, carry their slanderous witticisms and lies. For the press, it should be remembered, as well as the pulpit, and all the other instrumentalities by which public opinion is formed, is under the control of the governments, and foster an unceasing and an unmitigated hostility to whatever makes in favor of liberalism. Everybody has observed how vehemently abusive the leading English journals were towards America and Americans, until an increasing commercial intercourse had softened the asperities of the two nations, and made it the interest of both to cultivate more friendly feelings, which heaven strengthen and expand! But there has been no such relenting on the continent, where the gazettes, that are allowed to speak of us at all, still maintain the old tone of banter, ridicule, and abuse. There is one of them in particular, that vile panderer to aristocratic assumption and pride, *Galignani's Messenger*, of Paris, which purposely misrepresents every incident of our affairs, and every trait of our character. A European, who should form his opinion of us from the meagre and distorted accounts of

this source, must look upon our society as in a chaotic and savage condition, destitute of all the higher elements of civilization, and quite given over to the blackleg and the cut-throat. Long columns of murders and outrages, such as may be gathered, by considerable industry, from the records of our extreme western borders, are paraded as incidents of our daily life, alternated with the fantasies of Mormonism, or the terrors of servile insurrection.

What can the "silent influence of example" do against this systematic and obstinate perversion of the truth? What can societies, which know little of us, and that little conveyed to them through discolored mediums, know of the practical workings of democracy in this country? Nor is there much, in the conduct and character of Americans who travel abroad, to improve the prevailing misconceptions in Europe. A large number of our citizens make the world acquainted with their persons, not always to our advantage. Many of them, we are happy to say, do no discredit to their origin. Our young artists, and literary men, especially—some of our clergymen, and

here and there a merchant, by their intelligence and unobtrusive modesty, produce the most favorable impressions. They circulate quietly in the best families, and by the information they diffuse as well as by their manners, commend their country no less than themselves to a kind regard. But by far the larger proportion of our nomadic tribes—commercial men, generally, who, having scraped up a rapid fortune, conceive it necessary to achieve a tour of Europe—without education, or refinement, or clear or earnest republican convictions—by their ridiculous aping of the extravagances of foreign fashion, and their loud, blatant, vulgar parade of wealth, utterly repel and disgust, not only the people of standing, but the common people, who often have as nice a discernment of what is true and becoming as the more cultivated classes. They are also almost universally conservatives, who deride or affect to deride the government of their country, professing great admiration of the methods and doings of the monarchies, while, in every discussion of the vital principles that distinguish between despotism and democracy, their sym-

pathies lean, if not avowedly, at least implicitly, to the side of power. Oh, how bitterly have we heard the leaders of the great emancipating movement of Europe complain of this base treason of the Americans, to whom they naturally looked for support, but only found a mean and detestable affectation of aristocracy. The poor fellows had read our constitutions and laws, had heard of our prosperity, had caught the echoes of those public rejoicings in which we boast so much of the glories of republican freedom, and they expected to encounter in every native, born to the inheritance of such noble institutions, the friend of universal liberty. Alas, a moment's conversation has filled them with astonishment and dismay! None of us forget, we presume, the high hopes with which that exalted and accomplished man, Kossuth, came to our shores, expecting to meet in every man a soldier of the democracy, by which he had been redeemed? But can we recall some of the incidents of his tour without a blush, deeper than the crimson of yon decaying maple? Can we forget the low abuse, the cold contempt, the

shallow compliments with which he, the exile, the patriot, the hero—after being fêted and extolled, as no foreigner ever was before—was allowed to return? What, though he loved his country too well and sought too eagerly to enlist the active sympathy of others in her cause—what, though, in his burning sense of the degradation and suffering of the European masses, he would have raised a crusade of freedom against the despots of the world—could we not, on a calm consideration of our foreign relations, have respectfully declined his invitations, or discreetly postponed the acceptance of them to a more fitting time, should a more fitting time ever come—without joining in the hue-and-cry of the oppressors against him, heaping him with invectives, ridicule, and taunts? Did he not bring to us as vouchers of his sincerity, and as appeals to our regard, a long life of patient, noble, and magnanimous struggle against wrong—an eloquence that eclipsed all ancient and modern fame—attainments in language and history that seemed exhaustless in their variety and grace—and, more than all, the sad, but honorable fact of his

exclusion from every land but our own and England? Yet, in the face of these immortal titles to regard, these claims upon our generous indulgence and ardent love, there were some Americans who could take part in his systematic revilement and misconstruction! Need we wonder, then, that a similar class abroad pursue a career, and profess sentiments, which bring us into lasting and wide dishonor?

But, worse than the general want of information about us in Europe, worse than the latent or blatant infidelity to their principles of Americans, official or otherwise, worse than the calumnies of Dickens, Galignani, or the *Times*, are the uses which the upholders of despotism make of the existence of slavery in the southern portions of this confederacy. Its apparent inconsistency with our leading political principles, and the exaggerations which prevail in regard to its practical evils, enable them to depict us, one and all, as slave-drivers and oppressors, bent only on the pursuit of gain, to which we sacrifice alike the dictates of justice, the restraints of self-respect and

the promptings of patriotism. Unwilling or unable to apprehend the peculiar structure of our government, they confound all the inhabitants of the States into one mass of miscreants, who war at will upon humanity, kidnapping, torturing, outraging, and slaying their poor victims, with all the lust and none of the remorse of tigers. Behold, they exclaim, the model republic, behold democracy in practice, behold the boasted freedom of America, —three millions of human beings in the dust, while their free and independent task-masters

“Chain them and task them, and exact their sweat !”

It is in vain that the leaders of the liberal movements try to explain away this imputed disgrace ; in vain they show the origin of slavery, in vain they state its intricate connection with the vital interests of society, in vain they allege the fewness of those who are implicated in it, in vain they describe it as an exception and an anomaly, while they point out the beneficent and glorious effects which freedom has wrought for us, in the face of this alleged

weakness—a story of negro oppression, well-told, will scatter their declamations to the winds, and damage our repute, through large circles of influence, and over long periods of time.

There are, however, one or two checks to these disparaging views, which operate with some force in Europe. A considerable number of the common people acquire no small, though perhaps a vague, knowledge of the United States, from the correspondence of their friends who have emigrated hither, and who write back to their impoverished relatives of their easy success in the life of the New World. In crossing the Atlantic on one occasion, for instance, we saw a shabby-looking German on board the vessel, who had been ill nearly all the voyage, and only as we neared port had been able to crawl on deck to snuff the fresh air. Entering into conversation with him, we learned that, some six years before, he had left his fatherland, to settle in the west; he had contrived by his labor to purchase a farm, and to stock it; a railroad was opened near his house, and now he was returning to his native

village, with ten thousand dollars in bank, to persuade his father, and as many of his neighbors as he could, to remove to the land which had been a Golconda to him. "But why will you not remain in Germany," we asked, "now that you have the means to live?" His reply was, that "the freedom of America was more to him than its opportunities of fortune. He had left his home in a condition not better than that of a slave; he returned to it the citizen of a great and noble nation, where he was eligible to the highest distinctions, and the equal of all his fellows, universally respected as such. Could he remain in a rotten despotism, where the alternative of his personal and political subjection was civil war?" Now, that man was a missionary of republicanism, spreading the aspiration, if not the knowledge of freedom, and, with his compeers of the same stamp, working silent revolutions of states, which in the form of emigration move whole townships to their exodus.

It is evident, at the same time, that such men rather kindle hope, than impart knowledge. They create a private impatience of the re-

straints of despotism, without communicating precise intelligence as to the nature of republicanism. They cannot be said, therefore, to instruct or form public opinion ; and the same thing might be remarked of the professed revolutionists, who, though they have read our history, and caught inspirations from the great deeds of our forefathers, and informed themselves of our subsequent triumphs, yet inoculate their followers rather with spirit than with knowledge. One is often surprised, in conversing with the liberals of Europe, even with distinguished men among them, to discover how little they really know of the genuine principles of republicanism, how much of their liberal enthusiasm is a recoil from oppression, mingled with wild hopes of liberty, and what a chasm there is between their notions of what government should be, practically, and our own calm, firm, easy-working, and just, scientific, political system. One does not, however, infer from these, the unfitness of the European liberals for freedom—(seeing that it demonstrates their unfitness for every other political state but that of freedom—for how can such

men abide absolutism ?)—but simply the vagueness of their conceptions, and particularly their want of an intimate acquaintance with our institutions. Had they studied the American example more, they would entertain more consistent and enlightened political theories. They would have been saved from many of the vagaries of socialism, retaining only its scientific elements, and their practical attempts at the realization of freedom would not have miscarried with such signal disaster.

Four splendid exceptional events, however, in our foreign intercourse have stamped themselves upon the memories and hearts of many in Europe. When the noble frigate the *Macedonian*, a war ship no more,

“ Built in the eclipse and rigged with curses dark,”

but a messenger of love, was freighted with the generous contributions of the American people, to the starving people of Ireland, a thrill of electric joy, passing through the frames of the sufferers, was caught and carried round the globe, as far as the deed was heard. When, too, the inevitable Jackson extorted from lin-

gering France, the just dues of our citizens, on the single condition of "Pay or we'll make you," the old diplomats of Europe, accustomed only to protocolling, intriguing and postponing, raised their drowsy heads, to ask with some astonishment, "Who is this impertinent young genius that dares to talk to a venerable monarchy in this strain?" So also the able reply of Mr. Webster to the impertinences of Hulseman, fell with a crash among the mouldy archives of Vienna. But no event, we suspect, has been of more efficiency in awakening the Old World to a consciousness of our existence, than the prompt, decided, and glorious act of Captain Ingraham, when, in the face of the Austrian fleet, he threw the national ægis over the prostrate form of a poor Hungarian exile, and pointed to his guns. The shout of *Vive la Republique*, which circled around the hills of Smyrna, was echoed from the hearts, if not the voices of millions of men.

In spite of these occasional impressions, we cannot but think, in respect to the mark we make in Europe, that the majority there really knows little about us; that, among the

conservative classes, we are grossly and willfully misjudged; that, among the liberal and popular classes, we are estimated through exaggerating mediums rather than by any correct standard, while our political influence is only indirect and casual, and by no means commensurate to our power and station. Those patriots of the Fourth of July stamp, who go about like peacocks, admiring their own prodigious tails, are hardly justified in their vanity by the actual facts; for while they are contemplating themselves through a glass of compound magnifying power, the world is looking at them, when it looks at all, through an inverted telescope.

It is a matter of small concern to a man what the world may think of him if the supreme object of life be to take care of the main chance, letting the universe wag as it may. But a man whose life is guided by great principles, who cherishes exalted convictions of duty, who is solicitous for the welfare of his fellows, who conceives that he is the possessor of truths of vital significance and moment, is anxious that his name should be respected, and

his influence felt. For the same reasons a nation, of high aims and honorable ambition, and especially a nation that holds itself to be in some sort the representative and responsible director of a vast and beneficent movement, desires to receive a due consideration and deference. The historical nations which have moulded the destinies of humanity—Greece, Rome, France, England, Russia—are the nations that have asserted their own titles to respect, not in empty boasting, but by actual deeds—while the nations which have lingered in the race, impressing no character on advancing civilization, and leaving no footsteps, even in the desert—China, Japan, Turkey, Portugal, Spain—are those which have shut themselves up in their own exclusive circles, and pursued no broad, generous, world-embracing policy.

The slight impression, therefore, that the United States has yet made on the nations of the globe is to be deplored. Both we ourselves and the world have been losers by the default. Our internal advancement has been unparalleled; but we have achieved no corre-

sponding external influence. We have an all-sufficient consciousness of our own strength, but Christendom has failed to recognize it; is, in fact, only beginning to feel it remotely, putting us aside in all the great controversies of the nations, as bearded men thrust aside an ungrown boy, or rather overlooking our existence as though we were not. Who has thought, for instance, in the arrangements of "the Eastern question," which have now agitated Europe for a year, that the United States had anything to do with the matter? Has it been so much as consulted in a single movement? Is it ever reckoned in these or any other of the vast distributions of human interests and human happiness, as one of the parties to be advised with? Not at all; we are not enumerated among the Great Powers—are indeed left out of the calculation, as the crippled, the blind, the diseased, or the old women are omitted in a council of war. But is this a position for a great people? It is true, that it may not have been, and may not yet be, for our interest, to take part in European troubles—but, then, it is for us, and not

for others, to determine how far and when we shall act or not act. We must be the masters of our own destinies, and not mere ciphers in the world, like the savage tribes of our western wilderness, or the remote, feeble, degraded, despised islanders of the Pacific. If we are one of the nations of the earth—sovereign, independent, and powerful—let it be so distinctly understood; but if we be not, let us stop our fatuous boastings, and sink quietly down, like an oyster, in its complacent mud, satisfied with whatever of succulence the chance waves waft to our shells.

The course of our argument has brought us, it will be seen, to a consideration of the proper foreign policy of the government, which is now beginning to occupy the field of American politics. Thus far we cannot be said to have had a foreign policy. Our attention has been so absorbed by urgent domestic necessities, that it has left us neither time nor capacity to engage in the complicated debates of the external world. Can this be so any longer? With commerce weaving a network for us over every sea—with traveling and trading citizens in

every country—with an expanding territory, that, while it looks back to Europe, is also looking over to Asia—with a whole continent and its adjacent islands to the south, imploring either exploration, or protection, or annexation—with new channels of adventure opening on every side—with friendly nations struggling in the grasp of contending despotisms, and beseeching us for sympathy and aid—with one neighbor of insatiate maw striving to monopolize the opulent markets of the East—with another imitating the ambition of Charlemagne or Napoleon, for universal empire—in short, with a thousand varying impulses and seductions, driving and soliciting our mercurial and fearless people, it is inevitable that we shall get involved, whether we will it or not, in the great political, industrial, and social movements of mankind. We are, in fact, already embarked on the wide, wide sea—we have quitted the petty streams of our inland, and the timid harbors of our coast, and there is no course left for us but to guide the gallant vessel of state, cleaving the outer tides, with all a seaman's prudence and a seaman's tact, and yet

with all a seaman's daring, and a seaman's dauntless energy.

"There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her sails,
There gloom the dark, broad seas."

The problem for us, then, is not whether we shall have a foreign policy, for that, as we contend, is already decided by events, but what that policy shall be. How shall we deport ourselves towards the other nations of the earth? What position shall we assume in their controversies? What character and course do we mean to assert for ourselves?—these are the imminent and clamorous questions of the time. They are questions which, in one aspect, bristle with difficulties, but which, in another aspect, are of the readiest solution. If we mean to launch forth upon the troubled waters of existing diplomacy—if we design to conduct our affairs according to the traditional laws of intrigue and deceit, which are the accepted methods of courts and bureaus—we shall be plunged at once into endless embarrassments; but, if we desire simply to adhere to our own convictions of right and

duty, avoiding all entangling alliances, and disdaining all complicated and juggling manœuvres, but asserting our own principles at all hazards, the way for us is clear—not wholly free from embarrassments, but free from dishonor and disgrace.

Tell us what an upright, sympathetic, fearless man—a man of unequivocal, unswerving principles—would do in the society of his equals and fellows; tell us what aims he would cherish, what deportment he would maintain, what prudent and wise, but unfailing maxims he would lay at the fountain-head of all his being; and we will tell you what ought to be the foreign as well as the domestic deportment of a great nation! For nations are but larger men, governed by the same rules of justice and Christian sympathy and principle. Prove that it is best for a man to be controlled only by the probabilities of his commercial success—prove that the circle of his interest and that of his immediate family ought to be the horizon of his endeavors and hopes—prove that he has no vital connection with, or joint responsibility for his race—and then we

pledge ourselves to prove the same low theory of existence as the true policy of that man's nation! But admit, on the other hand, that Christianity, and its heir and legatee, democracy, have revealed a higher and nobler ideal of life, and then you admit that nations are moral beings, bound to a rigid obedience to, and an active prosecution of, all the laws of human duty, according to their condition.

Now, the United States, in reference to the other nations of the earth, are placed in this relation. They are young, fresh, and vigorous, abounding in wealth, exulting in strength, and eager for action. They come of a race, the Anglo-Saxon, seemingly endowed with a deathless spring and vitality—a race which crushed old Rome, when Rome oppressed the world—which reared the stupendous structure of British enterprise—which impelled the armies of the Reformation—which planted in the New World the hardiest of its colonists—and which now, commanding the citadel as well as the outposts of civilization, wields the destinies of all the tribes. They have been reserved by Providence, moreover, for the exemplification of

the most beneficent theory of government that was ever vouchsafed to man. Great heavens! how can we, then, how can any American, hesitate as to the great part his country ought, and is clearly called, to play in the rapidly-developing drama of the nineteenth century?

What! exclaims some tremulous Aspen, who has money in the funds, Would you have America, like an opium-crazed Chinese,

“Run a muck, and tilt at all he meets?”

Must it, the Anacharsis Clootz of nations, proclaim itself the “orator of the human race,” or, like a Don Quixote of democracy, go searching the world for forlorn damsels to protect?

For his sake, we will be a little more explicit. The United States, we have said, must have a foreign policy.—good or bad, wise or foolish, self-advancing or self-debasing. It must have it; for it cannot escape, if it would, the position forced upon it by its relations to the world. It cannot cut the web of trade which it has thrown round the globe; it cannot seclude itself from all contact with other nations; it cannot fly from the contagion of sympathy; it

cannot leap the bounds of knowledge, nor avoid the dominion of morals and religion. Yet, trade, contact, sympathy, knowledge, religion, all compel it to a decision of the mode in which it will bear itself in its international intercourse.

It seems to us that our true policy may be expressed, under its several heads, as follows. 1st, a rigid fidelity, both at home and abroad, to the great democratic principle, which is the essence of our national life; 2nd, a prompt and full protection of every citizen, guiltless of wrong, wherever he may be, and whoever he may be; 3rd, an exact fulfillment, to the very letter, of the obligation of treaties, at every cost; 4th, the instant arrest of all schemes of foreign aggression, coupled with a willingness to receive into the Union new nations, that are thoroughly republican in their government and their societies; and, finally, an avowed and unreserved sympathy with people struggling for their emancipation, the earliest recognition of their independence, and a guaranty of that independence, when once established, against the forceful or wanton interference of other nations,

and in support of the uniform and acknowledged public law of the civilized world.

The majority of these points, we are sure, will meet approval in this community. No American can wish that our republic should be other, in any of its bearings, than a democratic republic ; no American can be reasonably opposed to the pacific extension of commerce ; no American, out of Sing Sing, or the lunatic asylum, would wish to deny the sanctity of treaties. As to the protection of all citizens, the recent demonstrations on the Koszta affair have settled that ; and so, the only reservations or controversies our schedule suggests, must relate to the form in which it has presented the subjects of annexation and intervention.

No one can be more profoundly convinced than we are, that the best interests of the American people look to a concentration, rather than a dispersion of their power. We have land enough—more than can be occupied and cultivated for two hundred years ; we enjoy already every variety of climate and every character of soil ; we have no formidable neighbors to threaten our progress in any direction ;

and we have no need of conquests, either to insure our future expansion or to fortify our present tenures. The projects of colonial aggrandizement, which some put forth, are as uncalled for as they are unprincipled. If they were undertaken, they could but distract our energies, waste our resources, retard the increase of manufactures and the arts, excite sectional animosities, provoke foreign wars, and, supposing them successful, add nothing essential to our internal strength. No nation that ever existed had less to expect from violent aggressions than ours; to none is the example of barbarous, old, all-conquering Rome, which has been conspicuously cited to inspire us, less applicable; for to none is the arbitrary genius of military enterprise more repugnant, or the gentle arts of peace more congenial. Away, then, with the mad schemes of plunder and bloodshed, with which the lust of adventure strives to impregnate the restless excitability of our people!

But, though we oppose the frenzy of territorial acquisition, let us not oppose the gradual and legitimate growth of the nation! The concentration of our capital and industry on the

opportunities we already possess, the careful yet rapid development of our internal resources, the energetic pursuit of present advantages, the advancement and perfecting of the civilizing tendencies now at work—these must be our prime objects: but a Chinese exclusiveness, an iron-ringed and churlish repulsion of foreign accretions, must never be thought of. If there are nations about us—Canada or Mexico—eager to participate in the benefits of our federal union—if they are poor, dependent, distracted alone, while they would become rich, vigorous, and happy united, let us not forbid the banns of marriage, but welcome them to our arms with a bridegroom's embrace.

The federal relation is the true relation for all people,

“The unity and married calm of states,”

bearing the richest fruit, sanctifying and sweetening intercourse with delicious friendships, while the old treaty relation is a cold, casual, and licentious cohabitation—a bondage of fear and feebleness, and exposed to perpetual strifes. The latter is uncertain and willful; the former

constitutional and permanent. The one depends on the caprice of monarchs and majorities—the other is fixed by eternal, ever-strengthening law. The one is a mere alliance, as fragile as the whims of those who are parties to it; but the other is a union, steel-clasped and cemented, yet fluent with freedom. Thus, while the older nations of Europe exhibit the spectacle of hostile camps, which enjoy peace during temporary truces only, these thirty nations of the New World are joined in a perpetual amity, each free, yet as a whole harmonious. The principle of federal union, in short, is the highest principle of political connection known to man; and wherever it is permitted to extend, will carry with it the blessings of peace, industry, wealth, and popular enlightenment, even until the world shall be embraced in that

“Immortal league of love, which brings
Our free, broad empire, state with state.”

As to what our screed of doctrine asserts in regard to intervention, it is nothing more than a declaration that we ought to uphold the recognized international law of the world,

against all wanton violations of it ; or, in the words of Mr. Webster, that we are prepared “to protect neutrality, to defend neutrality, and, if need be, to take up arms for neutrality.” It brings us, we admit, into direct conflict with the policy proclaimed by certain European sovereigns, at the congresses held successively at Aix-la-Chapelle, Troppau, Laybach, Verona, and Vienna, and which substituted their own arbitrary will for the long-settled and clearly-recognized international law of Christendom. It will be remembered that the maxims announced during those colossal plots against the rights of man and the dignity of nations were : 1st, that all popular and constitutional rights were held only as grants from the crown, or, in their own language, “that useful and necessary changes in legislation and in the administration of states ought *only* to emanate from the free will and well-weighed conviction of *those whom God has intrusted with power*—while all that deviates from this line necessarily leads to disorder, commotions, and evils far more insufferable than those they pretend to remedy ;” which was an unblushing allegation of the divine right of kings ;

and 2nd, the right of the sovereigns to interfere in the affairs of other nations—or, to use their own words again, “their undoubted right to take a hostile attitude in regard to those states in which the overthrow of the government may operate as an example;” which means their right to suppress attempts at popular enfranchisement, wherever they might be made.

Now, against the first of these atrocious doctrines, our very existence as a nation is an open, direct, and standing protest; for, if it be true, then our very existence as a free people is an act of rebellion, a state of anarchy, a daring resistance of the will of God! But the second of them is no less flagrant an outrage on public law and national rights. Both reign supreme over the continent of Europe, and have been, time and time again, forcefully asserted. When Spain restored the liberal constitution of 1812—when Naples revolted against the tyrannical Ferdinand—when Sardinia rose for its constitutional rights—when Poland, with a cry of agony, sprang from under the foot of the trampling Russ—when Germany rang with the patriotic cry of German unity—when Hungary,

by a series of gallant and glorious battles, had repelled the Austrian invader from her soil, and, in the eloquent, touching tones of her great leader, proclaimed her original independence—when Rome, catching from the noble spirit of Mazzini some of her ancient virtue, and her ancient valor, expelled her oppressors—the banded despots of that infamous league, called the Holy Alliance, stood by to extinguish the rising sentiments of liberty. The whole history of Europe, indeed, for the last thirty years, has been one continuous scene of monstrous and brutal outrage, inflicted by the parties to this pact of despotism, on people over whom they had no legitimate control, against the established law of nations, and against all justice, and all humanity.

Now, we say, that it is the bounden duty, the only wise, and, in fact, safe policy, for the United States, as a free and Christian nation—as a nation rejecting utterly, and with loathing, the infernal system of the monarchs, to protest against it, *totis viribus*, on every occasion, and at any risk. We say, that whenever any of these unhappy mediatized nations shall rise, to cast

off foreign oppression, our sympathies should be allowed to rush forth to its encouragement and aid; and that, when it shall have expelled the intruder, we should at once, and gladly, recognize its independence, and guaranty it, if need be, against the pillage of the imperial robbers. All that such a guaranty implies is an earnest and decided protest, in the name of violated law and outraged humanity, against a gigantic usurpation and fraud. Coming from the fresh young Republic of the West, and echoing from the hillsides of the Alps and the Apennines, along the valleys of the Rhine and the Danube, such a protest would be heard among the tottering dynasties like the roar of advancing thunder. It would be wafted, on its passage, by the ascending sighs of the nations; it would gather into one the voices of good men everywhere, and fall upon the startled ears of the conspirators like a blast from the last trumpet, calling them to judgment.

We have not the slightest apprehension that such a course would result in war. In the hazard of provoking a universal rising of the European populations, we do not believe that

any despot would be found bold enough to engage in a contest with an active and powerful foreign antagonist, against the known public law of the civilized world. That law, according to the dictates of justice, according to the established usage, according to received writers, is the complete, sovereign, exclusive independence of each nation, so long as it trespasses on no other nation. All nations, therefore, are interested in maintaining it, as much as individuals are interested in maintaining the laws of the society to which they belong. But, if it is to be thrown aside by the supporters of absolutism whenever it pleases them, then it must be disregarded by the supporters of freedom whenever it pleases freemen. There cannot be, in reason or equity, a right of intervention for one, and no right of intervention for the other—a right of systematic and persistent combination for the despots, but no right of combination for the democrats. If the monarchs engage in a Holy Alliance, the people must counteract them by another Holy Alliance, in the spirit of Beranger's well-known and beautiful poem.

Should a war, however, spring out of it, in what more just or magnanimous battle could a great people engage? Unlike the contests which have so often desolated our poor earth, it would not be a strife for territory, nor for a line of succession, nor for the subjection of weak dependents, but a glorious struggle for liberty, justice, and humanity—for the stricken rights of nations, for the violated majesty of law, for enlarged human intercourse, and for the golden rule of Christian civilization.

OCTOBER, 1853.

ANNEXATION.

How many and loud are the objurgations with which that pattern father of a family, Mr. Bull, visits the marauding propensities of his disinherited son, Jonathan? “The graceless urchin,” the old gentleman is constantly repeating, “who has already grown so large that his feet stick out far beyond his trowsers, is as greedy as one of his own turkey-buzzards, and as sharp and unconscionable as one of his own peddlers. He has, during the very short time that he has lived, cheated the poor Indians out of twenty or thirty States; has flogged Mexico into the relinquishment of half a dozen more, is bullying Spain for the surrender of Cuba, has hoodwinked Kamehameha I., until he scarcely knows whether the Sandwich Islands are his own or not, and is deliberately surveying Japan with a view to some future landing! Was there ever a more unprincipled, insatiable,

rapacious, gormandizing Filibuster than that same Jonathan, who fancies that the whole world was made for use, and his use, too, and has no more scruple about laying his hands upon any part of it, than a fox has in satisfying his hunger in a goose-pen !”

Having said this, Bull rolls up his eyes in the most moral manner, heaves a lugubrious sigh, and sits down to a perusal of the *Times*, which contains several long columns of dispatches from India, and a general account of the colonies from Australia and the Cape, to the most northern iceberg on which Capt. Maclure has recently hoisted the “meteor-flag.”

He is somewhat consoled by the perusal, and especially by the comments of the editor on the inappeasable ambition of republics. They encourage him into a sound appetite for his rolls and coffee, after which he smilingly turns to *Punch*, whose jokes upon yankee-doodledom are very mirthful, causing John to split his fat sides almost, over cunning exposures of American hypocrisy, boastfulness, negro-driving, and land-stealing. Meantime, the entertaining volumes of some traveler in “the States” are laid

upon his table, hot from the press, and brilliant with the keenest sarcasms provoked by our vulgarity, which the facetious Cockney (who, if he were called upon to read aloud what he had written, could not pronounce his own mother tongue,) shows up in a variety of the most amusing lights.

Well, touching a great deal of this, which gives John a good laugh, we shall have nothing to say ; many of us enjoy it quite as much as he can, and for better reasons ; but on the subject of annexation, or the imputed zeal of republics to grasp all they can get, we mean to put in an apology, using that word in its ancient sense, as both a denial and a justification. on the part of nations to take the property We mean to prove, firstly, that a willingness of their neighbors is no new thing under the sun, so that if the United States had been guilty of it, they would have been acting only in a line of decided precedents. And we mean to prove, secondly, that we have not been guilty of it at all, in any injurious sense, while our entire national action and diplomacy have been more liberal, just, candid, and forbearing, than

those of any other nation. Yes ; you facetious and vituperative Bulls ! *we* have been the first among nations to set the example of an open, generous, equitable international policy, and whatever advances modern statesmen may have made toward the substitution of highminded negotiations for over-reaching intrigue and secret diplomacy, they have in nothing surpassed us much calumniated republicans !

Many of the foreign tourists and editors, who chatter of American annexation, really seem to suppose that annexation has never before been heard of in the history of mankind. “ Did you ever ! ” they exclaim in tones of offended virtue, like an old lady, who has just been told some precious piece of scandal, forgetting, in the excess of her indignation and surprise, the small indiscretions of her own youth. “ Did you ever ? These republicans must be actually insane in their avidity for more lands ! Not satisfied with the immense slice of the western continent they now possess, they warn us Europeans off the rest of it, and are consumed with fiery desires for the islands of the sea. Like the republics of old, like the republics of Italy, this

modern republic gives token of the characteristic weakness of its kind ; it must live by conquest, and, like all its forerunners, swell until it bursts."

Oh ! Crapaud and Bull, how can you utter such nonsense ? Annexation is no new thing, nor is it peculiarly republican ! Every page of history is full of it, from the time of the earliest vagabond and fugitive, Cain, who built a city in the land of Nod, which was not his, until the latest English war in Burmah ! It is the one subject, indeed, the burden of human annals. The first command given to Noah, after the flood, was to be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, or, as it may be translated, take possession of the earth, and ever since, that divine injunction, if no other, has been faithfully obeyed by his descendants. Do we not all remember, that the condition of the magnificent blessings which the Lord promised to Abram, was, that he should begin a long process of annexation, by " getting out of his own country, and his own kindred, and his father's house," and settling in another land ? What was the Exodus of the children of Israel, under Moses, but

a preparatory step to the seizure of Canaan, which was no sooner taken than it was divided by lot, among the nine and a half tribes, the other two and a half having already pocketed their allowance on this side the Jordan? And what the whole subsequent career of the Hebrews under Joshua, but a series of skirmishes with their amiable neighbors, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, etc., whose country they had invaded, annexing "all the land, the hills, the south country, the valley and the plain, and the mountain of Israel and the valley of the same;" appropriating the cattle, despoiling the cities, smiting the kings, and utterly routing and rooting out the people, so that, as we are told, "not any one was left to breathe!" Nor was this wholesale and slaughterous policy much changed under the judges and the kings, in spite of the reverses experienced at the hands of the Moabites, the Midianites, and the Philistines; for, scarcely had they recovered their power under Saul and David, before they struck out again to the right and left, burning cities, levying bond-service, and converting everybody's territory to their own

use. Jerusalem, their great city, fell a prey at last to the same spirit, manifested by their Roman neighbors; yet, on the heels of this overwhelming disaster, the last vaticination of the apostle of Patmos, as his prophetic eyes swept down the tracks of time, was, that good Christians everywhere should "inherit the land."

The fact is, that none of these Orientals were ever over particular as to seizing the territories of a friend. If they wanted what he possessed, they took it, and gave him a drubbing if he objected. As far back as we can penetrate in their annals, even to those remote periods when the twilight of tradition itself merges in the primeval darkness, we find that their kings and leaders were adepts in the annexing business, carrying it on on a prodigious scale, and quite regardless of the huge rivers of blood which they often had to wade through, in the accomplishment of their purposes. Some of them, indeed, have left no other name behind them, for the admiration of posterity, than that acquired in expeditions undertaken with the laudable design of stripping a neighbor of his possessions. We know little of Sesostris

and Semiramis; but that little is enough to justify Edmund Burke, in setting over against the conquests of the former, about one million of lives, and against those of the latter, about three millions. "All expired," he exclaimed, "in quarrels in which the sufferers had not the least rational concern." Old Nebuchadnezzar, too, who flourished in Babylon, according to the Bible, what a thriving fellow he was in this line! The little state of Judea was scarcely a flea-bite for him; and though he despoiled Egypt, and demolished Tyre, he was quite uncomfortable until Phœnicia, Palestine, Syria, Media, Persia, and the greater part of India, were added to his already considerable farm. Nor, was he, after all, to be compared to that series of magnificent Persian monarchs, who thought no more of razing hundred-gated cities to the earth, and laying hold of vast empires, than Barnum's anaconda does of bolting a rabbit? There was first, Cyrus, a most prosperous gentleman, as the good Xenophon relates, who overran pretty much the whole of Asia; and next, his promising son, Cambyses, who took Tyre, Cyprus, Egypt, Macedonia, Thrace, etc.; and then *his*

son again, Xerxes, “a chip of the old block,” and finally *his* descendants once more, Artaxerxes, first, second, and third—all “chips of the old block”—what a way they had of sacrificing millions upon millions of people in their little territorial disputes? It was well, indeed, that the Greeks, at Marathon, put a stop to the ravages, or there is no telling to what extent they might have carried their sanguinary sports—perhaps as far as Alexander of Macedon, who, beginning with a small strip in the south of Europe, annexed patch after patch, until he became, beyond all question, the largest landed proprietor in the known world. A bird flying for several days together in a straight line, could scarcely have passed from the western to the eastern boundaries of his dominions. A splendid annexationist, truly, was the great Alexander!

There was one of the ancient nations, more modest than the rest, which we ought to except from this career of conquest and spoliation; for during the greater part of its existence it was content with its own moderate limits, and the production of Iliads, Prometheus Vincituses, Parthenons, and Orations de Corona. We refer to

Greece, which, being more republican than the rest of the world, ought to have been, according to the modern theory, more omnivorous than the rest. But Greece was poor-spirited in comparison. She had become so enamored with her own glorious skies and hills, was so delighted with her own fair climate, and so besotted with a certain dreamy notion of beauty and self-perfection, that, like a woman as she was, she seldom passed beyond her own threshold. Not that she was afraid of fighting, either, as certain places named Thermopylæ and Salamis bear witness; but that she was quite destitute of that grandeur of soul which led Belus, Sesostris, and the other illustrious individuals to whom we have referred, to cut their way to glory, by cutting the throats of so many of their fellow-humans.

We shall have to dismiss republican Greece, then, as rather an untoward case, and turn to imperial Rome. Ah! how her records blaze with examples of a thorough spirit of annexation! Suckled by a wolf in the beginning, Rome never lost her original vulpine nature, but, to the day of her dissolution, went prowling about the

world, wherever there was a sheep-fold to break into or an innocent lamb to be eaten. Look into the index of any popular history of her triumphs, and mark how it is composed of one unbroken series of annexations ! Thus it reads : B. c. 283, the Gauls and Etrurians subdued ; B. c. 278, Sicily conquered ; B. c. 266, Rome mistress of all Italy ; B. c. 264, the first Punic War ; B. c. 231, Sardinia and Corsica conquered ; B. c. 224, the Romans first cross the Po ; B. c. 223, colonies of Placentia and Cremona established ; B. c. 222, Insularia (Milan) and Liguria (Genoa) taken ; B. c. 213, the Second Punic War ; B. c. 212, Syracuse and Sicily conquered ; B. c. 210, Scipio takes New Carthage ; B. c. 204, Scipio carries the war into Africa ; B. c. 195, war made upon Spain ; B. c. 188, Syria reduced to a Roman province ; B. c. 168, Macedon becomes a Roman province ; B. c. 149, Third Punic War and conquest of Corinth ; B. c. 146, Greece becomes a Roman province ; B. c. 135, Spain a Roman province ; B. c. 133, Pergamus a Roman province ; B. c. 118, Dalmatia a Roman province ; B. c. 105, Numidia becomes a Roman province ; B. c. 99, Lusitania becomes

a Roman province ; B. C. 80, Julius Cæsar's first campaign—and after that the reduction of the world, from the hot sands of the desert, south, to the fogs of Britain in the north, and from the Euphrates to the Atlantic Ocean, in the other direction. The *veni, vidi, vici*, in short, was not an individual saying, but a universal Roman maxim.

We might refer, too, now that we are on the train of historical locomotion, to those extraordinary migrations of the German races, who seem to have had no other object in life than to overrun the territories of others, and who, in the end, coming on like whirling sand-storms of the desert, paid Rome in her own coin ; or to those exciting episodes of the Middle Ages, when myriads of pious and blood-thirsty crusaders flung themselves upon Asia, to recover the Holy Land ; or to the impartial ferocity of the Spanish and Portuguese in their excursions over South America ; or to the lively annals of treachery, freebooting, and assassination by which the many great and royal houses of Europe built up their power—such as the house of Bourbon, which gradually enlarged its

right to a few acres, to a right coextensive with France—or to the house of Hapsburg, a small German dukedom at the start, but now a mighty empire in which a dozen kingdoms are absorbed—or to the house of Bonaparte, which began without a sous to bless its stars with, but which speedily enlarged its phylacteries, and got itself warm on nearly all the thrones of the Continent: or, in brief, to a hundred other instances of enormous adventure and gigantic brigandage. But the truth is, that this kind of thing is the staple and uniform of all annals.

Rabelais, in his famous outline of conquest, which the gallant statesmen of Pichricole presented to that chivalric monarch, though he has caught the spirit of this national Rob-Royism, combining its own largeness of view with the easy effrontery of the swell-mob, hardly equals veritable history. “You will divide your army,” said the Duke of Smalltrash, the Earl of Swashbuckler, and Captain Durtaille, who were Pichricole’s advisers, “into two parts. One shall fall upon Grangouzier and his forces; and the other shall draw towards Onys, Xain-

toigne, Angoumois, and Gascony. Then march to Perigourt, Medos, and Elanes, taking, wherever you come, without resistance, towns, castles, and forts; afterwards to Bayonne, St. John de Luz, to Fuentarabia, where you shall seize upon all the ships, and, coasting along Gallicia and Portugal, shall pillage all the maritime places even to Lisbon, where you shall be supplied with all necessaries befitting a conqueror. By Copsodie, Spain will yield; for they are but a race of boobies! Then are you to pass by the Straits of Gibraltar, where you shall erect two pillars more stately than those of Hercules, to the perpetual memory of your goodness, and the narrow entrance there shall be called the Pichricolinal Sea. Having passed the Pichricolinal Sea, behold Barbarossa yields him your slave! And you shall conquer the kingdoms of Tunis, of Hippo, Argia, Bomine, Corone, yea, all Barbary. Furthermore, you shall take into your hands Majorca, Minorca, Sardinia, Corsica, with the other islands of the Ligustic and Balearian seas. Going along on the left hand, you shall rule all Gallia, Narbonensis, Provence, the Allobrogians, Genoa, Flor-

ence, Lucca ; and then—God be wi' ye—Rome ! Italy being thus taken, behold Naples, Calabria, Apulia, and Sicily, all ransacked, and Malta, too ! Thence we will sail eastward, and take Canadia, Cyprus, Rhodes, and the Cyclade Islands, and set upon the Morea. It is ours, by St. Irenæus ! and the Lord preserve Jerusalem !” With the enumeration of Lesser Asia and the entire east of Europe, the imagination of the monarch was excited, and he shouted, “ On, on, make haste my lads, and let him that loves me, follow me !”

No ! the fertile fancy of Rabelais, in the broadest play of its fun, does not equal the serious doings of some even of our modern nations. “ A century ago,” says the latest Blackwood, “ Russia, still in the infancy of civilization, was scarcely counted in the great European family. Gigantic, indeed, have been the forward strides she has since made, in power, influence, and territory. On every side she has extended herself ; Sweden, Poland, Turkey, Persia, have all in turn been despoiled or partially robbed by her. North and south she has seized upon some of the most productive

districts of Europe; the Baltic provinces on the one hand, Bessarabia and the Crimea on the other."

Be it observed, however, in justice to critic and criticized alike, that Russia is bashful, self-denying, almost ascetic in her lust of annexation, compared with another power, which we shall not name, lest we should shock its delicate sensibilities. But we could tell, "an we would," of a certain little island of the North Atlantic, in itself scarcely bigger than a bedspread, yet boasting of an empire on which the sun never sets. It has annexed to its slender chalk-cliffs, from year to year, one country after another, until now it exclaims, in the pride and plenitude of its dominion—

"Quæ regio in terris, nostra non plena laboris?"

which, in its own vernacular, means, "on what part of the earth have we not gained a foothold?" In Europe, there are Scotland, Ireland, the Orkneys, Gibraltar, Malta, Heligoland, and the Ionian Isles; in America, there are Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's Island, New-

foundland, and the Bermudas; in the West Indies, there are Jamaica, Barbadoes, St. Vincent, Tobago, Trinidad, Antigua, Dominica, the Bahamas, Guiana, and a dozen more; in Africa, there are Good Hope, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Gambia, and St. Helena; in Australia, there are New South Wales, Western Australia, Southern Australia, and Van Dieman's Land; and in Asia, there are, most monstrous of all, Ceylon and India, with its dependencies. Enough, one would say, in all conscience for a reasonable ambition; but it is not enough for the people of that little island—that model of all the national proprieties—which omits no opportunity now for extending its possessions, and almost with every steamer sends us word of new acquisitions in the East!

Alas! we must repeat it, annexation is *not* a new thing, *not* a peculiarity of republicans, and of late American republicans, in particular; not in any sense a novel iniquity over which we are just called to moralize! It is a practice as old as our race and as broad as our race; known to every people and every age; and as invariable, in its occurrence, as a natural

law. Wherever there have been weak nations to pillage, and strong nations to pillage them; wherever there have been men, like those splendid robbers of antiquity, willing to offer hecatombs of lives to their insane will to rule; wherever there have been chances opened to military genius, to rapacious selfishness, to the love of a row, to the hope of plunder, to the appetite for distinction and blood, to the mere vague, restless feeling for movement and change—there annexation has flourished. But, God in heaven! what a phantasmagoria of wrong, outrage, and despotism, its career unfolds! What spoliations, ravages, wars, subjugations, and miseries have marked its course! What crimson pictures it has painted on every page of almost every history! How the whole past, as we look at it, comes rushing down upon our vision, like a vast, multitudinous, many-winged army; with savage yells, with wild piercing whoops, with ringing war-cries, with sackbuts, and cymbals, and trumpets, and gongs, and the drowning roar of cannon; naked heroes, shaggy sheep-skinned warriors, glittering troops, phalanxes and serried legions, colossal cavalries;

now sweeping like frost-winds across the plains—now hanging like tempests on the mountains—now breaking in torrents through rocky defiles—and now roaring like seas around the walls of cities—onward and downward they come, irresistible, stormy, overwhelming: the mighty host, the stupendous vanguard of never-ending annexationists!

Note, also, that it is not in conquest alone that this spirit of aggrandizement has been exhibited; for, next to the history of conquest, the most terrible book that could be written would be a narrative of national colonization, or of the peaceful attempts of nations to create auxiliaries on distant shores. It would be a second Book of Martyrs, eclipsing in atrocities the rubric of Fox. It would show us innumerable homes, in all lands, made vacant by forced, or, quite as dreadful, voluntary exiles: the pathways across the lonely seas, lined, like the accursed middle passage of the slave-trade, with the bones of victims cast down to watery deaths; the inoffensive natives of many a continent and island driven mercilessly, by intruders, to the jungles, or the swamps, or to the

solitary fastnesses of the mountains; weary years of struggle on the part of the intruders themselves against disease, against poverty, against capricious and persecuting climates and intractable soils, and against the cruel extortions and oppressions of remote administrations; and, as the end of all, failure, in its worst forms, of industrial bankruptcy and social ruin.

Now, compared with the Brobdignagian scoundrelism of the older nations, both in the way of conquest and colonization, what have we poor republican Americans done? Why are we stigmatized, as offenders above all others, or as the special representatives of that national *avidus alienum*, which confesses neither limit nor principle? We have, since the commencement of our political existence, perfected three things: we have entered the lands of the Indians; we have acquired Louisiana, Florida, and Texas; and we have beaten Mexico out of California and a few other morsels of earth; to which let us add, that a few wild fellows of us meditate some time or other getting possession of Cuba, and, perhaps, of the Sandwich Islands. That is positively the front and substance of all

our trespasses ! But in what manner have they been committed ?

No one, we suppose, will question the propriety of our mode of acquiring Florida and Louisiana, which were purchased honorably in the open market ; therefore we will begin with the poor Indians. We have robbed them of their lands, it is said. But it is not so ; not a rood of their land have we which has not been honestly paid for, and more than paid for, as land goes, and a thousand times paid for in superior returns ! De Tocqueville made this charge in his book, and led Mr. Benton, who was then in the Senate of the United States, to call for a full “numerical and chronological official statement of all our dealings with the Indians, from the origin of the federal government in 1789 to his day, 1840,” which he procured from the department, making a full and accurate list of every acre that we had ever taken from any Indian tribe or individual. What is the result ? Why, it appears from the document, that the United States had paid to the Indians eighty-five millions of dollars for land purchases up to the year 1840, to which

five or six millions may be added for purchases since—say ninety millions. This is near six times as much as the United States gave Napoleon for Louisiana, the whole of it, soil and jurisdiction, and nearly three times as much as all three of the great foreign purchases—Louisiana, Florida, and California—cost us! and that for soil alone, and for so much as would only be a fragment of Louisiana or California. “Impressive,” says the distinguished statesman, to whom we are indebted for this exposition of an Indian policy, “as this statement is in the gross, it becomes more so in the detail, and when applied to the particular tribes whose imputed sufferings have drawn so mournful a picture from Mons. de Tocqueville.” Fifty-six millions went to the four large tribes, the Creeks, the Cherokees, the Choctaws, and the Chickasaws, leaving thirty-six millions to go to the small tribes whose names are unknown to history, and which it is probable the writer on American democracy had never heard of when sketching the picture of their fancied oppressions. Mr. Benton adds, in respect of these small remote tribes, that,

besides their proportion of the remaining thirty-six millions of dollars, they received a kind of compensation suited to their condition, and intended to induct them into the comforts of civilized life. He gives one example of this drawn from a treaty with the Osages in 1839, which was only in addition to similar benefits to the same tribe in previous treaties, and which were extended to all the tribes which were in the hunting-state. These benefits were, “two blacksmith-shops, with four blacksmiths, five hundred pounds of iron, and sixty pounds of steel annually; a grist and a saw-mill, with millers for the same; 1,000 cows and calves; 2,000 breeding swine; 1,000 ploughs; 1,000 sets of horse-gear; 1,000 axes; 1,000 hoes; a house each for ten chiefs, costing two hundred dollars a piece; with six good wagons, sixteen carts, twenty-eight yokes of oxen, with yokes and log-chains for each chief; besides agreeing to pay all claims for injuries committed by the tribe on the white people, or on other Indians, to the amount of thirty thousand dollars; to purchase their reserved lands at two dollars per acre; and to give them six thousand dollars

more for certain old annuities. In previous treaties had been given seed grains and seed vegetables, with fruit seed and fruit trees, domestic fowls, laborers to plough up their ground and to make their fences, to raise crops and save them, and teach the Indians how to farm ; with spinning, weaving, and sewing implements, and persons to show their use." Now all this, observes our authority, was in one single treaty, with an inconsiderable tribe, which had been largely provided for in the same way in six different previous treaties ! But all the rude tribes—those in the hunting-state, or just emerging from it—were provided for with equal solicitude and liberality, the object of the United States being to train them to agriculture and pasturage, to conduct them from the hunting to the pastoral and the agricultural state. Not confining its care, however, to this, and in addition to all other benefits, the United States have undertaken the support of schools, the encouragement of missionaries, and a small annual contribution to religious societies who take charge of their civilization. Moreover, the government keeps up a large estab-

lishment for the special care of the Indians, and the management of their affairs; a special bureau, presided over by a commissioner at Washington City; superintendents in different districts; agents, sub-agents, and interpreters, resident with the tribe; and all charged with seeing to their rights and interests—seeing that the laws are observed towards them; that no injuries are done them by the whites; that none but licensed traders go among them; that nothing shall be bought from them which is necessary for their comfort, nor anything sold to them which may be to their detriment. Had the republic been actuated, in its intercourse, by any of that selfish and infernal spirit which animates the old monarchies, it would have swindled or beaten the Indians out of their possessions at once, and, in case of resistance, put the whole race to the sword.

But it will be answered, “You have carried them by force, from their ancient homes, from the graves of their sires, and planted them in new and distant regions!” We reply, that we have done so, in the case of a few tribes, or, rather, remnants of tribes, as a matter of abso-

lute necessity, and not in any grasping or unkind spirit. A small, but savage and intractable race suddenly surrounded by a powerful and civilized people, whose laws and customs it cannot or will not accept, but whose vices are readily spread among them, has no other destiny but to die of its corruptions, to perish in arms, or to be removed by gentle methods to some more remote and untroubled hunting-grounds. It was at the option of the United States to choose either of these courses, and its choice, on the advice of Jefferson, whose noble fortune it has been to initiate so much of our most wise and beneficent policy, fell upon the most humane, peaceful, and considerate of the three. Indeed, the language in which this plan was urged, in the second inaugural address of the eminent democrat we have just named, may be used also as the language of the history which records its execution. "The aborigines of these countries," said he, "I have regarded with the consideration their position inspires. Endowed with the faculties and the rights of men, breathing an ardent love of liberty and independence, and occupying a country which

left them no desire but to be undisturbed, the streams of overflowing population from other regions directed itself on these shores. Without power to divert, or habits to contend against it, they have been overwhelmed by the current, or driven before it. Now reduced within limits too narrow for the hunter-state, humanity enjoins us to teach them agriculture and the domestic arts—to encourage them to that industry which alone can enable them to maintain their place in existence, and to prepare them in time for that state of society which, to bodily comforts, adds the improvement of the mind and morals.” We have, therefore, liberally furnished them with the implements of husbandry and householding; we have placed instructors amongst them in the arts of first necessity; and they are covered with the ægis of the law against aggressors from among ourselves. A few stubborn individuals, misled by prejudice or ambition, and carrying with them fragments of their tribes, have resisted the inevitable fate of their race, and have compelled our authorities to subdue them by arms; but the greater part of the tribes have

gone to their new homes beyond the Mississippi cheerfully, and in peace. Some, like the Cherokees, have been raised to a higher civilization; and all are in a condition superior to that in which they were found by our people.

The annexation of Texas, secondly, it is needless to dwell upon, because it was an event so inevitable as a historical development, and so clear in all its principles, that it requires no justification. A bordering people, in the natural increase of population and trade, settle in a foreign state, where they acquire property and rear families; they gradually become citizens, and look upon the place as their home; but they are oppressed by the government, and rise in revolt; they carry on a successful revolution; they organize and maintain a free and stable government; they are acknowledged as independent by all the leading powers of Christendom; and then, to secure themselves from external assault, and to acquire additional internal strength—led, too, by old and natural affinities—they seek a constitutional alliance with the people to whom they formerly be-

longed, and are still cordially attached. That is the whole history of Texas; and we see nothing, in our yielding to her request for admission to the rights and protection of the Federal Union, that is in the least extraordinary, or atrocious, or greedy. As a question of domestic policy, the annexation may have properly divided opinion; but as a question of international relations, nothing could have been more simply and obviously just.

Again: in respect to conquests, we have but one to answer for—that of Mexico; and there is nothing in either the commencement, the course, or the end of that—if even it may be called a conquest—for which the lover of his country or humanity needs to blush. It was a regular war, begun in vindication of the clearest national rights, which had been outraged; carried on with vigor, but with the strictest regard, also, to the most just and honorable principles; and closed by a deliberate treaty, in which, though it was in our power to confiscate the whole nation, by reducing it to the state of a dependent province, we refrained from all arbitrary or exorbitant demands, and

agreed to pay generously for every acre of land that we retained, and for every iota of loss we had occasioned. It is true that the territories thus acquired, proved, subsequently, through their unexampled mineral deposits, to be of priceless worth; but this peculiar source of value was unsuspected at the time, while it is probable that, if they had remained in the same hands, they might have been unknown to this day.

Compare, then, the "annexation" of the United States, for which it is so largely ridiculed, or so roundly abused, with the same process as it has been conducted by other nations! Not with those predatory expeditions of the magnificent bandits of the East; not with the Roman conquests, which were incessant scenes of violence and tyranny; not with the irruptions of the northern hordes, whose boast it was that no grass grew where they had trod; not with the merciless and gory marches of Pizarro or Cortes, because those were the deeds of rude and brutal ages; nor yet, even with the stormy *anabasis* and *katabasis*, as De Quincy somewhere calls it, when

“The Emperor Nap. he did set off
On a pleasant excursion to Moscow ;”

but compare it with the more modern, and therefore, we may suppose, the more just and humane management of their external relations, by any of the most advanced nations of Europe ! With the treatment of Algiers by the French, for instance ; or of Poland by Russia ; or of Hungary and Italy by Austria ; or of Ireland and India by England ! We shall see the latter subduing, plundering, depopulating, wherever they spread ; maintaining their supremacy only by armies of functionaries and soldiers, who consume the substance and blast the industry of their dependents ; and shaping their entire policy with a single eye to their own interests. We shall see, also, that they are hated and cursed, with unrelenting bitterness, by their victims. On the other side, we own no subject nations, no colonial victims, no trembling provinces—and we never desire to own them ; we waste no fields, we ruin no cities, we exhaust no distant settlements : the weak Indian tribes among us, we have striven to redeem and civilize ; the weak Mexican and Spanish

races about us, a prey to anarchy and misrule, we offer the advantages of stable government, of equal laws, of a flourishing and refined social life; and we aim at no alliances which are not founded on the broadest principles of reciprocal justice and goodwill. Away, then, with the base calumnies which hold us up to the world as a nation of reckless filibusters! Away with the European cant of the invading tendencies of republicanism!

“Our past, at least,” as Webster said, “is secure.” It brings no crimson to our cheeks: not, however, that our people are any better in themselves than other people—human nature, we suppose, being much the same everywhere—but because our free and open institutions, through which the convictions of men, and not the interests of monarchs or families, are expressed, incite no sinister and iniquitous proceedings. The glory of Republicanism is, that it is above-board, reflecting solely the extant wisdom and justice of the aggregate of its supporters.*

* It is honorable, in one sense, and yet humiliating, in another, to confess that the greatest achievement of the United

Thus far, we have only disposed of the invectives of foreigners, showing what gratuitous and unfounded malice they are; but we have yet to consider our subject in its most important aspect—its bearings upon the external policy of the state. The annexation of contiguous territories, in one shape or another, is a question that must constantly arise in the course of our progress, and it is well for us to know the true principles on which it should be managed.

From the time that Adam was sent out of the sunset gate of Eden, down to the exodus of the Pilgrims, and the hegira from all lands into the golden reservoirs of California, there appears to have been a decided movement southward and westward, of the populations of the world. It was never constant and continuous, and yet, contemplated in large epochs, it was always discernible. By natural growth, by the multiplying ties of trade, by warlike excursions, by voluntary migrations, by revolutions, and by colonizations, the superior races

States yet, in the way of extinguishing a foreign people, was the celebrated bombardment of Greytown.

of the great central cradles of Western Asia have spread, pursuing the paths of the sun, until they now quite circle the globe. Nor is there any reason for believing that this diffusive *connatus* will be stopped, while there remains a remotest island, or secluded western nook, to be reduced to the reception of Christianity and European arts. An instinct in the human soul, deeper than the wisdom of politics, more powerful than the sceptres of states, impels the people on, to the accomplishment of that high destiny which Providence has plainly reserved for our race.

Annexation thus being an inevitable fact, it would be in vain for the American people to resist the impulses which are bearing all nations onward, to a closer union. Nor, when we consider the attitude in which we are placed towards other nations of the earth, is it desirable for us, or them, that this influence should be resisted. As the inheritors of whatever is best in modern civilization; possessed of a political and social polity which we deem superior to every other; carrying with us, wherever we go, the living seeds of freedom, of intelligence,

of religion ; our advent everywhere, but particularly among the savage and stationary tribes who are nearest to us, must be a redemption and a blessing. South America and the islands of the sea ought to rise up to meet us at our coming, and the desert and the solitary places be glad that the hour for breaking their fatal enchantments, the hour of their emancipation, had arrived.

If the Canadas, or the provinces of South or Central America, were gathered into our Union, by this gradual and natural absorption, by this species of national *endosmosis*, they would at once spring into new life. In respect to the former, the contrasts presented by the river St. Lawrence, which Lord Durham described, and which are not yet effaced, would speedily disappear. "On the American side," he says, "all is activity and bustle. The forests have been widely cleared ; every year numerous settlements are formed, and thousands of farms are created out of the waste ; the country is intersected by roads. On the British side, with the exception of a few favored spots, where some approach to American prosperity is ap-

parent, all seems waste and desolate. . . The ancient city of Montreal, which is naturally the capital of Canada, will not bear the least comparison in any respect with Buffalo, which is a creation of yesterday. But it is not in the difference between the larger towns on the two sides that we shall find the best evidence of our inferiority. That painful but undeniable truth is most manifest in the country districts, through which the line of national separation passes for a thousand miles. There on the side of both the Canadas, and also of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, a widely scattered population, poor, and apparently unenterprising, though hardy and industrious, separated by tracts of intervening forests, without town or markets, almost without roads, living in mean houses, drawing little more than a rude subsistence from ill-cultivated land, and seemingly incapable of improving their condition, present the most instructive contrast to their enterprising and thriving neighbors on the American side."

The Canadas have rapidly improved since Durham wrote, galvanized into action chiefly

by American example and energy, and the larger freedom they now enjoy; but what might not their development be if wholly emancipated and republicanized? Or, still more, in respect to the silent and barren regions of the southern continent, what magical transformations a change of political relations would evoke! The rich wastes given over to the vulture and the serpent—where the sunshine and air of the most delicious climate fall upon a desolation—would blossom and put forth like the golden-fruited Hesperides, opening a glorious asylum to the over-crowded labor of southern Europe; the immense rivers, which now hear no sound, save their own complaining moan as they woo in vain the churlish banks that spurn their offers of service, would then laugh with ships, and go rejoicing to the sea; the palsy-smitten villages, broken into pieces before they are built, would teem like hives with “singing-masons building golden eaves;” and the scarcely human societies, leprous with indolence, or alternately benumbed by despotism, or convulsed by wild, anarchical throes, would file harmoniously into order, and,

like enchanted armies, when the spells of the sorcerers are gone, take up a march of triumph :

“ Such power there is in heavenly polity.”

Nor would the incorporation of these foreign ingredients into our body—we mean by regular and pacific methods, by a normal and organic assimilation, and not by any extraneous force or fraud—swell us out to an unmanageable and plethoric size. It is the distinctive beauty of our political structure, rightly interpreted, that it admits of an almost indefinite extension of the parts without detriment to the whole. In the older nations, where the governments assume to do everything, an increase of dimensions is always accompanied by an increase of danger—the head is unable to control the extremities, which fly off into a St. Vitus’s dance of revolution, or the extremities are paralyzed, through a congestion of despotic power in the head. But with us there is no such liability : the political power, dispersed and localized, the currents of influence pass reciprocally from the centre to the circumference, and from the cir-

cumference to the centre, as in the circulation of the blood ; and whether the number of members in the system be more or less, the relations of strength between them and the head remain pretty much the same ; or, rather, as our federal force is the net result and quotient of the contributions of the separate states, it is rather strengthened than weakened by the addition of new elements. Our circle of thirty-one integers works as harmoniously as it did when it was composed of only thirteen, while the probability of rupture is lessened, from the greater number which are interested in the Union. A powerful community, like New York or Ohio, might have its own way opposed to a mere handful of smaller communities ; but opposed to a vast network of communities, though never so small in themselves, it would be compelled to listen to reason. Indeed, the dangers likely to arise in the practical workings of our system will result from an excessive centripetal, rather than centrifugal, tendency, and the annexation of new states is, therefore, one of the best correctives of the vice.

But be that as it may, it is clear that we

must maintain some relations to the other nations of the world, either under the existing international law, or by treaty, or else by regular constitutional agreement. Now, which of the three is the best? International law, as we all know, is the merest figment in practice, proverbially uncertain in its principles, without sanctions or penalties, and wholly ineffective when it conflicts with the will of powerful states, of which fact the whole continent of Europe is witness. Treaties of amity and commerce are often only temporary, and may be abrogated at the option of the parties to them, or openly violated, when one of the parties is strong and unscrupulous. But a constitutional union, an eternal and brotherly league of independent and equal sovereignties, is the most permanent, peaceful, and unoppressive in which states can be joined—the wisest, strongest, and happiest relation that can be instituted among civilized nations.

The fears, therefore, that some express at our assumed velocity and breadth of expansion, are ill-founded, unmanly, and un-American. If we ever had swept, or were likely to sweep

over the earth, sirocco-wise, drinking the dews, withering the grass, blearing the eyes of men, or blistering their bodies, there would then be some excuse for such apprehensions ; if we proposed, as a few insane propagandists do, to carry the slavery of the southern states abroad, to blight, by its pestilent influences, the golden tropics ; or, if in the might and intensity of the centrifugal impulse there were danger of dislocating our own system, whirling the fragments off into measureless space, it would become the character of every patriot to shout a halt. But Caucasians as we are, carrying the best blood of time in our veins—Anglo-Saxons, the inheritors of the richest and profoundest civilizations : Puritans, whose religion is their most imperishable conviction : native Yankees of indomitable enterprise, and a capacity for government and self-government, which masters every element—the effeminacy of climate, the madness of gold-hunting, the spite and rage of seas and winds—we go forth as a beneficent, not a destructive agency ; as the bearers of life, not death, to the prostrate nations—to the over-ripe or the under-ripe alike—to all who lie on

the margins of Bethesda, waiting for the good strong arm to thrust them in the invigorating pool.

Precisely, however, because this tendency to the assimilation of foreign ingredients, or to the putting forth of new members, is an inevitable incident of our growth—because, too, of the manifest advantages to all concerned—there is no need that it should be specially fostered or stimulated. It will thrive of itself: it will supply the fuel of its own fires; and all that it requires is only a wise direction. A masterly inactivity is here emphatically the rule; for it will better secure us the desired result than the noisy, proselytizing, buccaneering zeal of over-hasty demagogues. The fruit will fall into our hands when it is ripe, without an officious shaking of the tree. Cuba will be ours, and Canada and Mexico, too—if we want them—in due season, and without the wicked impertinence of a war. Industry, commerce, silent migrations, the winning example of high prosperity, and of a freedom which sports like the winds around an Order which is as firm as the Pyramids, are grappling them by unseen ties,

and drawing them closer each day, and binding them in a unity of intercourse, of interest and of friendship, from which they will soon find it impossible to break, if they would, and from which, also, very soon, they would not break if they could. Let us, then, await patiently the dowries of time, whose promises are so complacent and decided,

“Nor weave with bloody hands the tissue of our line.”

It should be, moreover, always borne in mind, as the truth most certain of all the truths that have been demonstrated by the experience of nations, that their home policy, their domestic relations, their internal development, the concentration, not the dispersion, of their energies, are the objects to which they should devote their first and last, most earnest and best regards. It is the most miserable and ruinous of all ambitions which leads nations into dreams of external domination and power. The wars they engender, deadly as they may be, are comparatively nothing to the sapping drains and sluices they open in the whole body, and every limb and mem-

ber of the state. "Ships, colonies, and commerce," has been the cry of the Old World cabinets, and the effects are seen in bankruptcies, in Pelions-upon-Ossas of debt, in rotten courts, in degraded and impoverished peoples, and in oppressed and decaying neighbor-nations.

France, for instance, instead of giving a chance to her thirty-six millions of lively and industrious people, to recover and enrich their soils, to open roads, to make navigable their streams, and to build themselves up in knowledge and virtue, has ever been smitten with an insane love of foreign influence; but might rather have been smitten with the plague. She has overrun and ruined Lombardy; she has overrun and paralyzed, if not ruined, the Netherlands and Holland; she has overrun and arrested the civilization of Catalonia; she has overrun and deeply wounded Belgium; she has been the perpetual enemy of the free cities of Germany, stirring up thirty years war, and assisting Austria in infamous schemes of destruction; she has invaded Genoa, Sicily, Venice, Corsica, Rome, suppressing them time and

again with her armies ; she hangs like a nightmare upon Algeria ; she maintains penal colonies at Guiana—and all with what gain to herself ? With what gain ? Look at the semi-barbarism of her almost feudal rural population ; at the ignorance, licentiousness, and crime of her cities ; at her vast agricultural resources, not only not developed, but laden with taxes and debt ; at her unstable governments, shifting like the forms of a kaleidoscope ; at her Jacqueries, her St. Bartholomews, her dragonades, her *Coups d'Etat* ; her fusiladed legislators, and her exiled men of science, and her poets ! France, under a true decentralized freedom, with the amazing talents of her quick-witted and amiable people, left to the construction of their own fortunes, might now have been a century in advance of where she is ; but she followed the *ignis fatuus* of glory, of power abroad instead of industry and peace at home !

England, too, in spite of her noble qualities and gigantic industry, has depopulated Ireland, starved India, ruined her West India islands, and half hamstrung the Canadas, in order to make distant markets for her trade, and yet, her

poor at home are imbruted, half-starved, earning only one-tenth of what they might for her, while younger and freer nations are enticing away the commerce of the very dependencies which it has taken whole generations of wrong, torture, and bloodshed to create !

On the other hand, the United States, refraining from the spoliation of her neighbors, devoting herself steadily to the tasks of industry set before her, welcoming the people of all nations, poor and rich, restricting government to its simplest duties, securing every man by equal laws, and giving to every citizen opportunities of honor, fortune, self-culture—has, in a short fifty years, overtaken the most advanced nations, has left the others far in the rear, and, in less than ten years from the date at which we write, will take her stand as the first nation of the earth—without a rival—without a peer, as we hope without an enemy—but, whether with or without enemies, able, single-handed, to dictate her terms, on any question, to a leash of the self-seeking and decrepit monarchies of Europe. By not aiming at foreign aggrandizement, of which she is so often recklessly ac-

cused, she has reached a position which puts it easily in her power. Her strength has been in her weakness; her ability to cope with the world has grown out of her unwillingness to make the attempt; and behold her now a magnificent example of the good effects of peace, justice, and hard work. God grant that she may never find occasion to walk in the devious paths of intrigue, or to raise the battle-cry of invasion; and God grant, too—we ask it with a double earnestness—that she may not, in her prosperity, forget those that are in adversity; that she may never take part with the oppressor, but give her free hand of sympathy to the oppressed, whenever and wherever they shall undertake the struggle for their rights!

FEBRUARY, 1854.

“AMERICA FOR THE AMERICANS.”

AN individual, masked under the vulgar name of SAM, furnishes just now a good deal more than half the pabulum wherewith certain legislators and journalists are fed. Whether he is a mythical or real personage—a magus or a monkey—nobody seems to know; but we are inclined to regard him as real, because of his general acceptance among Dalgetty politicians, and because of the irresistible merriment his occasional “coming down” on something or other affords the newspapers. We saw a paunchy old gentleman the other day, with a face like the sun, only more red and blue and spotty, and a dismally-wheezy voice, who came near being carried off with a ponderous apoplectic chuckle, which seized him when somebody casually observed that “Sam was pitching into the police,” and he was only relieved from the fatal consequences by a series of desperate

movements which resembled those of a seventy-four getting under-way again after the sudden stroke of a typhoon. Now, if Sam was not unquestionably a real personage, and this old gentleman unquestionably a real disciple of his, we are at a loss to account for the reality of the phenomena thus exhibited.

But whether real or mythical, it has been impossible for us to raise our admiration of Sam to the popular pitch. After due and diligent inquiry, we have arrived at only a moderate estimate of his qualities. In fact, considering the mystery in which he shrouds his ways, we are disposed to believe that he is more of a Jerry Sneak than a hero. The assumption of secrecy on the part of any one, naturally starts our suspicions. We cannot see why he should resort to it, if he harbors only just or generous designs. We associate darkness and night with things that are foul, and we admire the saying, that twilight even, though a favorite with lovers, is also favorable to thieves. Schemes which shrink from the day, which skulk behind corners, and wriggle themselves into obscure and crooked places, are not the schemes we

love at a venture. And all the veiled prophets, we apprehend, are very much like that one we read of in the palace of Merou, who hid his face, as he pretended to his admirers, because its brightness would strike them dead, but in reality because it was of an ugliness so monstrous that no one could look upon it and live.

There is an utterance, however, imputed to this impervious and oracular Sam, which we cordially accept. He is said to have said that “America belongs to Americans”—just as his immortal namesake, Sam Patch, said that “some things could be done as well as others”—and we thank him for the concession. It is good, very good, very excellent good—as the logical Touchstone would have exclaimed—provided you put a proper meaning to it.

What is America, and who are Americans? It all depends upon that, and, accordingly as you answer, will the phrase appear very wise or very foolish. If you are determined to consider America as nothing more than the two or three million square miles of dirt, included between the Granite Hills and the Pacific, and

Americans as those men exclusively whose bodies happened to be fashioned from it, we fear that you have not penetrated to the real beauty and significance of the terms. The soul of a muck-worm may very naturally be contented with identifying itself with the mould from which it is bred, and into which it will soon be resolved; but the soul of a man, unless we are hugely misinformed, claims a loftier origin, and looks forward to a nobler destiny.

America, in our sense of the word, embraces a complex idea. It means not simply the soil, with its coal, cotton, and corn, but the nationality by which that soil is occupied, and the political system in which such occupants are organized. The soil existed long before Vespucci gave it a name—as long back, it may be, as when “the morning stars sang together”—but the true America, a mere chicken still, dates from the last few years of the eighteenth century. It picked its shell for the first time amid the cannon-volleys of Bunker Hill, and gave its first peep when the old State House bell at Philadelphia rang out “liberty to all the land.” Before that period, the straggling and depend-

ent colonies which were here were the mere spawn of the older nations—the eggs and embryos of America, but not the fully-fledged bird. It was not until the political constitution of '89 had been accepted by the people that America attained a complete and distinctive existence, or that she was able—continuing the figure with which we began—to spread her “sheeny vans,” and shout a cock-a-doodle to the sun.

It would be needless, at this day, to state what are the distinguishing principles of that political existence. They have been pronounced ten thousand times, and resumed as often in the simple formula which every school-boy knows—the government of the whole people by themselves and for themselves. In other words, America is the democratic republic—not the government of the people by a despot, nor by an oligarchy, nor by any class, such as the red-haired part of the inhabitants, or the blue-eyed part; nor yet a government for any other end than the good of the entire nation—but the democratic republic, pure and simple. This is the political organism which individualizes us,

or separates us as a living unity from all the rest of the world.

All this, of course, would be too elementary to be recounted in any mature discussion, if recent events had not made it necessary to an adequate answer of our second question—who, then, are Americans? Who constitute the people in whose hands the destinies of America are to be deposited?

The fashionable answer in these times is, “the natives of this Continent, to be sure !” But let us ask again, in that case, whether our old friends Uncas and Chingachgook, and Kagne-ga-bow-wow—whether Walk-in-the-water, and Talking-snake, and Big-yellow-thunder, are to be considered Americans par-excellence ? Alas, no ! for they, poor fellows ! are all trudging towards the setting sun, and soon their red and dusky figures will have faded in the darker shadows of the night. Is it, then, the second generation of natives—they who are driving them away—who compose exclusively the American family ? You say, yes ; but we say, no ! Because if America be, as we have shown, more than the soil of America, we do not see

how a mere cloddy derivation from it entitles one to the name of American. Clearly, that title cannot enure to us from the mere argillaceous or silicious compounds of our bodies—clearly, it descends from no vegetable ancestry—clearly, it must disdain to trace itself to that simple relationship to physical nature which we chance to enjoy, in common with the skunk, the rattlesnake, and the catamount. All these are only the natural productions of America—excellent, no doubt, in their several ways—but the American man is something more than a natural product—boasting a moral or spiritual genesis, and referring his birth-right to the immortal thoughts, which are the soul of his institutions, and to the divine affections, which lift his politics out of the slime of state-craft, into the air of great humanitarian purposes.

The real American, then, is he—no matter whether his corporeal chemistry was first ignited in Kamschatka or the moon—who, abandoning every other country, and forswearing every other allegiance, gives his mind and heart to the grand constituent ideas of the republic—to the impulses and ends in which and by which

alone it subsists. If he have arrived at years of discretion—if he produces evidence of a capacity to understand the relations he undertakes—if he has resided in the atmosphere of freedom long enough to catch its genuine spirit—then is he an American, in the true and best sense of the term.

Or, if not an American, pray what is he? An Englishman, a German, an Irishman, he can no longer be; he has cast off the slough of his old political relations forever; he has asserted his sacred right of expatriation (which the United States was the first of nations to sanction), or been expatriated by his too ardent love of the cause which the United States represents; and he can never return to the ancient fold. It would spurn him more incontinently than powder spurns the fire. He must become, then, either a wanderer and a nondescript on the face of the earth, or be received into our generous republican arms. It is our habit to say that we know of no race nor creed, but the race of man and the creed of democracy, and if he appeals to us as a man and a democrat, there is no alternative in the premises. We must either

deny his claims altogether—deny that he is a son of God and our brother—or else we must incorporate him, in due season, into the household. It is not enough that we offer him shelter from the rain—not enough that we mend his looped and windowed raggedness—not enough that we replenish his wasted midriff with bacon and hominy, and open to his palsied hands an opportunity to toil. These are commendable charities, but they are such charities as any one, not himself a brute, would willingly extend to a horse found astray on the common. Shall we do no more for our fellows? Have we discharged our whole duty, as men to men, when we have avouched the sympathies we would freely render to a cat? Do we, in truth, recognize their claims at all, when we refuse to confess that higher nature in them, whereby alone they are men, and not stocks or animals? More than that: do we not, by refusing to confess a man's manhood, in reality heap him with the heaviest injury it is in our power to inflict, and wound him with the bitterest insult his spirit can receive?

We can easily conceive the justness with

which an alien, escaping to our shores from the oppressions of his own country, or voluntarily abandoning it for the sake of a better life, might reply to those who receive him hospitably, but deny him political association :—" For your good-will, I thank you—for the privilege of toiling against the grim inclemencies of my outcast and natural condition, which you offer, I thank you—for the safeguard of your noble public laws, I thank you ; but the blessed God having made me a man, as well as you—when you refuse me, like the semi-barbarians of Sparta, all civil life—when, with Jewish exclusiveness, you thrust me out of the holy temple, as a mere proselyte of the gate—your intended kindnesses scum over into malignity, and the genial wine-cup you proffer brims with wormwood and gall."

We are well aware of the kind of outcry with which such reasoning is usually met. We know in what a variety of tones—from the vulgar growl of the pot-house pugilist to the minatory shriek of the polemic, frenzied with fear of the Scarlet Lady—it is proclaimed that all foreign infusions into our life are venomous,

and ought to be vehemently resisted. Nor do we mean to deny the right of every community to protect itself from hurt, even to the forcible extrusion, if necessary, of the ingredients which threaten its damage. But that necessity must be most distinctly proved. The case must be one so clear as to leave no doubt of it, as an absolute case of self-defense. Now, there is no such overruling necessity with us, as to compel either the exclusion, or the extrusion, of our alien residents. They are not such a violent interpolation, as when grains of sand, to use Coleridge's figure, have got between the shell and the flesh of the snail—that they will kill us if we do not put them out and keep them out. A prodigious hue and cry against them wakes the echoes of the vicinage just now, such as is raised when a pack of hungry foxes stray into the honest hen-roost, but the clamor is quite disproportionate to the occasion. The foxes are by no means so numerous or predacious as they are imagined to be, and there is no such danger of them for the future that we need to be transfixed with fright, or scamper away in a stam-

pede of panic terror. The evils which our past experience of Naturalization has made known to us—for there are some—are not unmanageable evils, requiring a sudden and spasmodic remedy, and menacing a disastrous overthrow unless they are instantly tackled. The most of them are like the other evils of our social condition—mere incidents of an infantile or transitional state—of a life not yet arrived at full maturity—and will be worked off in the regular course of things. At any rate, they solicit no headstrong, desperate assault; only a consciousness of what and where our real strength is, and patient self-control.

On the other hand, it is a fixed conviction of ours, in respect to this whole subject of aliens—that there is much less danger in accepting them as citizens, under almost any circumstances, than there would be in attempting to keep them out. In the latter case, by separating them from the common life of the community—making them amenable to laws for which they are yet not responsible—taxing them for the support of a government in which they are not represented—calling upon them for pur-

poses of defense when they have no real country to defend—we should in effect erect them into a distinct and subordinate class, on which we had fastened a very positive stigma, or degradation. How lamentable and inevitable the consequences of such a social contrast !

The reader, doubtless, has often seen a wretched oak by the way-side, whose trunk is all gnarled and twisted into knots ; or he may have passed through the wards of a hospital, where beautiful human bodies are eaten with ulcers and sores ; or he may have read of the Pariahs of India, those vile and verminous outcasts, who live in hovels away from the cities, and prey on property like rats and weasels ; or, again, chance may have led him through the Jews' quarters, the horrid *ghettos* of the old continental towns, where squalor accompanies ineffable crime ; or, finally, his inquiries may have made him familiar with the free blacks of his own country, with their hopeless degradations and miseries ! Well, if these experiences have been his, he has discerned in them the exponents—in some, the symbols, and in others, the actual effects—of the terrible

spirit of exclusion, when it is worked out in society. For, it is a universal truth, that whatever thing enjoys but a partial participation of the life to which it generically belongs, gets, to the extent of the deprivation, diseased. It is also as universal a truth, that the spread of that disease will, sooner or later, affect the more living members. Make any class of men, for instance, an exception in society; set them apart in a way which shall exclude them from the more vital circulations of that society; place them in relations which shall breed in them a sense of alienation and of degradation at the same time—and they must become either blotches or parasites, which corrupt it; or else a band of conspirators, more or less active, making war upon its integrity. Let us suppose that some ruler, a Louis Napoleon, or Dr. Francia, should decree that all the inhabitants of a certain country, of oblique or defective vision, should be rigidly confined to one of the lower mechanical occupations; would not all the squint-eyed and short-sighted people be immediately degraded in the estimation of the rest of the community? Would not

the feeling of that debasement act as a perpetual irritant to their malice—lead them to hate the rest, and to prey upon them—and so feed an incessant feud—open or sinister, as the injured party might be strong or weak—between the strabismic families and those of a more legitimate ocularity? In the same way, but with even more certainty and virulence of effect, any legal distinctions among a people, founded upon differences of birth or race, must generate unpleasant and pernicious relations, which, in the end, could only be maintained by force. Say to the quarter million of foreigners who annually arrive on our shores, that like the *metoikoi* and *perioikoi* of the Greeks, they may subsist here, but nothing more; that the privileges of the inside of the city, suffrage, office, equality, ambition, are closed to them; that they may sport for our amusement in the arenas, look on at our courts, do our severer labors for us, and reverently admire our greatness; but that they shall have no part nor lot in that political life which is the central and distinguishing life of the nation; and, so far forth, you convert them, infallibly, into ene-

mies—into the worst kind of enemies, too—because internal enemies, who have already effected a lodgment in the midst of your citadel. Coming as an invading army—these thousands—with avowed unfriendly purposes—they might easily be driven back by our swords: but coming here to settle and be transmuted into a caste—into political lepers and vagabonds—they would degenerate into a moral plague, which no human weapon could turn away. Proscribed from the most important functions of the society in which they lived, they would cherish an interest separate from the general interest, and, as they grew stronger, form themselves into an organized and irritable clanship. Their just resentments, or their increasing arrogance, would sooner or later provoke some rival faction into conflict; and then the deep-seated, fatal animosities of race and religion, exasperated by the remembrance of injuries given and taken, would rage over society like the winds over the sea.

History is full of warnings to us on this head. No causes were more potent, in sundering the social ties of the ancient nations, than

the fierce civil wars which grew out of the narrow policy of restricting citizenship to the indigenous races. No blight has fallen with more fearful severity on Europe than the blight of class domination, which, for centuries, has wasted the energies and the virtues, the happiness and the hopes, of the masses. Nor is there any danger that threatens our own country now—scarcely excepting slavery—more subtile or formidable than the danger which lurks in those ill-suppressed hatreds of race and religion, which some persons seem eager to foment into open quarrel. Already the future is walking in to-day. The recent disgraceful exhibitions in this city—the armed and hostile bands which are known to be organized—the bitter taunts and encounters of their leaders—the low criminations of the Senate-house—the pugilistic *mélée*, ending in death—the instant and universal excitement—the elevation of a bully of the bar-room into the hero of a cause—the imposing funeral honors, rivaling in pageantry and depth of emotion the most solemn obsequies that a nation could decree its noblest benefactor—all these are marks of a soreness

which needs only to be irritated to suppurate in social war.

Our statesmen at Washington are justly sensible of the dangers of sectional divisions ; but no sectional divisions which it is possible to arouse are half so much to be dreaded as an inflamed and protracted contest between natives and aliens, or Catholics and Protestants. The divisions which spring from territorial interests appeal to few of the deeper passions of the soul ; but the divisions of race and religion touch a chord in the human heart which vibrates to the intensest malignity of hell. Accordingly, the pen of the historian registers many brutal antagonisms, many lasting and terrible wars ; but the most brutal of all those antagonisms, the most lasting and terrible of all those wars, are the antagonisms of race, and the wars of religion.

It will be replied to what we have hitherto urged, that our argument proceeds upon the imputation, that aliens are to be totally excluded from political life ; whereas, nobody proposes such a thing, but only a longer preparatory residence.

We rejoin, that the persons and parties who are now agitating the general question, because they propose the exclusion of adopted citizens from office, do, in effect, propose a total political disqualification of foreigners. All their invectives, all their speeches, all their secret assemblages, have this end and no other. They agree to ostracize politically every man who is not born on our soil ; they conspire not to nominate, to any preferment, not to vote for, any candidate who is born abroad ; and these agreements and conspiracies are a present disfranchisement, so far as they are effective, of every adopted citizen, and a future anathema of every alien. Whether the aim be accomplished by public opinion, by secret conclave, or by law, the consequences are the same ; and the general objections we have alleged, to the division of society into castes, apply with equal force.

We rejoin again—in respect to the distinction made between a total exclusion of foreigners, and a change in the naturalization laws—that it is a distinction which really amounts to nothing. For, firstly, if the probation be ex-

tended to a long period, say twenty-one years as some recommend, it would be equivalent to a total exclusion; and, secondly, if a shorter period, say ten years, be adopted, the change would be unimportant, because no valid objection against the present term of five years would thereby be obviated. Let us see, for a moment.

Firstly, as to a term of twenty-one years: we say that, inasmuch as the majority of foreigners who arrive on our shores are twenty-five years of age and over, when they arrive, if we impose a quarantine of twenty-one years more, they will not be admitted as citizens until they shall have reached an age when the tardy boon will be of little value to them, and when their faculties and their interests in human affairs will have begun to decline. Whether they will care to solicit their right at that period is doubtful, and, if they do, they can regard it as scarcely more than a mockery. How many of them will live to be over forty-five or fifty years of age, if we leave them in the interval to loiter in the grog-shops, and amid scenes of vice, as they are more likely to do if

not absorbed into the mass of citizens? How many, having passed twenty-one years of political ban, and even of ignominy—for it would come to that—would be thereby better prepared for adoption? The younger ranks of the emigrants might possibly benefit by the hope of one day becoming citizens, and look forward to it with some degree of interest; but to all the rest it would be a *fata morgana*, and the protracted test virtually an interdiction.

Secondly, as to any shorter novitiate, say ten or twelve years, it would not be more effective, in the way of qualifying the pupil, than the existing term. As the laws now stand, an alien, giving three years' notice of intention, must have been five years consecutively a resident of the United States, and one year a resident of the State and County in which he applies—must be of good moral character—must be attached to our constitution and laws—must abjure all foreign powers, particularly that he was subject to—and must swear faithful allegiance to the government of his adoptive country—before he can be admitted a member of the State. What more could be exacted of

him, at the end of ten years, or twenty? If unfit for acceptance—according to these requirements—at the end of five years, would he be more likely to be fit at the end of ten? In short, is there a single disqualification, which zealous nativists are apt to allege against foreigners—such as their ignorance, their clan-nishness, their attachment to foreign governments, and their subjection to the Roman Catholic Church—which would be probably alleviated by means of a more protracted embargo? None; on the contrary, as we have intimated in another place, all their worse qualities would be aggravated by the exclusive association among themselves for so many years longer, in which they would be kept—while they would lose, as we shall show more fully hereafter, the best means of fitting themselves for good citizenship, in losing the educational influences of our actual political life.

It is true, in respect to the present laws of naturalization, that our courts have shown a baneful laxity in enforcing their conditions, and that our leading parties, corrupt everywhere, are nowhere more corrupt than in their modes

of naturalizing foreigners ; but there is no reason to expect that either courts or parties will grow more severe under more stringent laws. They will have the same motives, and be just as eager, to license fraudulent voters then as they are now ; and the few days before a great Presidential election will exhibit the same disgraceful scenes of venality and falsehood. No simple change in the time of the law, at any rate, can work any improvement. Nor will such a change render it any more difficult for the dishonest alien to procure the franchise. He can just as easily swear to a long residence as a short one ; while it will happen, that the rarer we make the privilege, the more we increase the difficulties of access to it, the longer we postpone the minority, the greater will be his inducements to evade the law. In proportion as a prize becomes more valuable, the temptations to a surreptitious seizure of it increase ; but where an end is easily achieved, the trouble of waiting till it be obtained in the regular way is preferred to the hazards of a clandestine or criminal attempt to carry it off.

Besides, it is a puerile piece of injustice towards the alien, to inflict him with a disability because of our own *laches*. We have failed to administer our laws as they should be, and, experiencing some injury in consequence, we turn round to abuse the foreigner, like a foolish and petulant boy who kicks the stone over which he stumbled. The more magnanimous as well as sensible course would be, to amend our own faults. Let us make the five years of probation what the courts may easily make them, by rigidly exacting the criterions of the law—an interval of real preparation for citizenship—and the present term will be found long enough. But whether long enough or not, the question of time, that is, whether it shall be five years or ten, is a simple question of internal police, not of lasting principles, to be determined by the facts of experience, and by no means justifying the virulent and wholesale denunciations of foreigners it is the fashion with some to fulminate.

In fact, the entire logic of the nativists is vitiated by its indiscriminating character. Because a large number of the Irish, and a con-

siderable number of the Germans, have been reduced, by the long years of abuse which they have suffered at home, to an inferior manhood, it is argued, that all the rest of the Germans and the Irish, and all the Swiss, English, French, Scotch, Swedes, and Italians, must be made to suffer for it; but what a grievous error! The poor exiles and refugees, many of them, are, no doubt, sufficiently debased—some, even, excessively insolent, too—but among them are others who are not so—among them, are thousands upon thousands of men, of hardy virtues and clear intelligence, whose industry contributes vastly to the wealth, as their integrity does to the good order, of our society. Laboring like slaves for us, they have built our cities and railroads; piercing the western wilds, they have caused them to blossom into gardens; taking part in our commerce and manufactures, they have helped to carry the triumphs of our arts to the remotest corners of the globe. It was from their ranks that our statesmanship recruited Gallatin, Morris, and Hamilton—that the Law acquired Rutledge, Wilson, and Emmet—that the Army won its Gates, its Mer-

cer, and its Montgomery—the Navy its Jones, Blakeley, and Barry—the Arts their Sully, and Cole—Science, its Agassiz, and Guyot—Philanthropy, its Eliot, and Benezet, and Religion its Witherspoon, its White, its Whitfield, and its Cheverus.

The adopted citizen, no doubt, preserves a keen remembrance of his native land; but “lives there on earth a soul so dead” as not to sympathize in that feeling? Let us ask you, oh patriotic Weissnicht, all fresh as you are from the vociferations of the lodge, whether you do at heart think the less of a man because he cannot wholly forget the play-place of his infancy—the friends and companions of his boyhood—the old cabin in which he was reared—and the grave in which the bones of his honored mother repose? Have you never seen two long-separated friends, from the Old World, meet again in the New, and clasp each other in a warm embrace, while their conversation blossomed up, from a vein of common memory, in

“Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth;”

and did you not love them the more, in that

their eyes grew liquid with the dear old themes ? Or is there, in the whole circle of your large and respectable private acquaintance, a single Scotchman to whom you refuse your hand because his affections melt under the “ Auld lang syne” of Burns, or because his sides shake like a falling house when “ Halloween” or “ Tam O’Shanter” is read ? Can you blame even the poor Frenchman if his eyes light up into a kind of deathless glow, when the “ Marseillaise,” twisted from some wandering hurdy-gurdy, has yet power to recall the glorious days in which his fathers and brothers danced for liberty’s sake and with gay audacity, towards the guillotine ? We venture to say for you, no ! and we believe, if the truth were told, that often, on the lonely western plains, you have dreamed over again with the German his sweet dream of the resurrection and unity of the Fatherland. We have ourselves seen you at the St. George dinners, oh Weissnicht, swell with a very evident pride, when some flagrant Englishman, recounting, not the battles which his ancestors for ten centuries had won on every field of Europe, but the better trophies gained by Shakespeare, Mil-

ton, Bacon, or Cromwell, told you that a little of that same blood coursed in your veins ! The tell-tale blood, as it tingled through your body and suffused your cheeks, confessed the fact, if your words did not ! How, then, can you, who gaze at Bunker Hill with tears in your eyes, and fling up your hat of a Fourth of July with a jerk that almost dislocates the shoulder, retire to your secret conclave, and chalk it up behind the door, against the foreigner, that he has a lingering love for his native country ? Why, he ought to be despised if he had not, if he could forget his heritages of old renown ; for it is this traditional tenderness, these genial memories of the immortal words, and deeds, and places, that constitute his patronymic glories, which show that he has a human heart still under his jacket, and is all the more likely, on account of it, to become a worthy American. Do not delude yourself, however, into the shallow belief that the aliens, because of these sentimental attachments, will be led into the love of their native governments, which, having plundered them and their class, for years, at last expelled them to our shores. Ah ! no—poor devils—

they have not been so chucked under the chin, and fondled, and caressed, and talked pretty to, and fed with sweet-cakes, and humored in all sorts of self-indulgences, by the old despotisms as to have fallen in love with them, forever and ever. On the contrary, if the reports are true, quite other endearments were showered upon them—such as cuffs and kicks—with a distinct intimation, besides, as Mr. Richard Swiveller said to Mr. Quilp, after pounding him thoroughly, that “there were plenty more in the same shop—a large and extensive assortment always on hand—and every order executed with promptitude and dispatch.” Now, these are experiences that are apt to make republicans of men, and to fill them with other feelings than those of overweening attachment to their oppressors !

But this is a slight digression, and we return to the main current of our argument, to say—what we esteem quite fatal to all schemes for excommunicating foreigners, or even greatly extending their minority—that the best way, on the whole, for making them good citizens, is to make them citizens. The evils of making

them a class by themselves, we have already alluded to, and we now speak, on the other hand, of the benefits which must accrue to them and to us from their absorption into the general life of the community. It is universally conceded by the liberal writers on government and society, that the signal and beneficent advantage of republican institutions (by which we mean an organized series of local self-governments) is, that their practical influences are so strongly educational. They train their subjects constantly into an increasing capacity for their enjoyment. In the old despotic nations—as we are all aware—where the State is one thing and the people another—the State is, in reality, a mere machine of police, even in its educational and religious provisions—maintaining a rigid order, but acting only externally on the people, whom it treats either as slaves or children. It does not directly develop the sense of responsibility in them, nor accustom them to self-control and the exercise of their faculties. But in free commonwealths—which abhor this excessive centralizing tendency, and which distribute power through subordinate municipalities,

leaving the individual as much discretion as possible—the people are the state, and grow into each other as a kind of living unity. Thrown upon their own resources, they acquire quickness, skill, energy, and self-poise ; yet, made responsible for the general interests, they learn to deliberate, to exercise judgment, to weigh the bearings of public questions, and to act in reference to the public welfare. At the same time, the lists of preferment being open to them, they cultivate the virtues and talents which will secure the confidence of their neighbors. Every motive of ambition and honor is addressed to them, to improve their condition, and to perfect their endowments ; while a consciousness of their connection with the state, imparts a sense of personal worth and dignity. In practice, of course, some show themselves insensible to these considerations, but a majority do not. The consequence is, that the commonalty of the republic are vastly superior to the same classes abroad. Compare the farmers of our prairies to the boors of the Russian steppes, or to the peasants of the French valleys ! Or compare the great body of the working men in

England with those of the United States ! Now, the American is not of a better nature than the European—for he is often of the same stock—nor is there any charm in our soil and climate unknown to the soil and climate of the other hemisphere ; but there is a difference in institutions. Institutions, with us, are made for men, and not men for the institutions. It is the jury, the ballot-box, the free public assemblage, the local committee, the legislative assembly, the place of trust, and, as a result of these, the school and the newspaper, which give such a spur to our activities, and endow us with such political competence. The actual responsibilities of civil life are our support and nutriment, and the wings wherewith we fly.

If, consequently, you desire the foreigner to grow into a good citizen, you must subject him to the influences by which good citizens are made. Train him as you are yourselves trained, under the effective tutelage of the regular routine and responsibility of politics. He will never learn to swim by being kept out of the water, any more than a slave can become a

freeman in slavery. He gets used to independence by the practice of it, as the child gets used to walking by walking. It is exercise alone which brings out and improves all sorts of fitnesses—social as well as physical—and the living of any life alone teaches us how it is to be best lived. Nor will any one work for an end in which he and his have no part. They only act for the community who are of the community. Outsiders are always riders. They stand or sit aloof. They have no special call to promote the internal thrift and order, which may get on as it can, for all them. But incorporate them into it, and it is as dear as the apple of their eye. Choose a person selectman of the village, and he conceives a paternal regard for it instantly, and makes himself wondrously familiar with its affairs, and their practical management. Show a rude fellow the possibility of a place in the police, and he begins to think how important the execution of the law is. Hang the awful dignity of a seat on the justice's bench before the ambition of the country squire, and straightway he looks as wise as Lord Eldon, and will strive to become so, rather than otherwise.

How the prospect, too, of a winter at Albany or Washington stimulates all the local notables into a capacity for it, as well as a desire. Thus, our whole political experience is an incessant instruction, and should no more be withdrawn from any class in society than the atmosphere. It is prettily told, in that book of Eastern fables which delights our youth and enriches our manhood, that the father of Aladdin Abushamat, lest he should be hurt by the world, kept him under a trap-door, where he was visited only by two faithful slaves. But, pining and weary, the young man one day stole from his retreat, and running to his father, who was syndic of the merchants, said: "Oh, my father, how shall I be able to manage the great wealth thou hast gained for me, if thou keepest me here in prison, and takest me not to the markets, where I may open a shop, and sit among the merchandise, buying and selling, and taking and giving?" The father thought for awhile, and said: "True, my son; the will of God be done; I will take thee to the market-street and the shops," and we are told that Aladdin Abushamat became, though not without

some slips, a very rich man, as well as the right hand of the great Caliph, Haroun Alraschid, Prince of the Faithful, whose name be ever exalted !

MAY, 1855.

SHOULD WE FEAR THE POPE?

ONE cause of the current movement against foreigners is, the hereditary aversion of Protestants to the Roman Church. It is alleged, that the doctrines of that Church assert the right of the Pope to interfere in the temporal affairs of kingdoms and states, while they demand for him the exclusive allegiance of its members; and the inference is, that no one professing those doctrines can yield an honest allegiance to any other power.

We propose to inquire how far these positions are true; and, if true, to what extent and in what way we ought to resist their dangers.

Before doing so, it may be proper to premise, that we have not been educated to any overweening estimate of the claims of the Catholic Church. On the contrary, all our studies and observations, as well as our general habits of

thought, have led us into convictions utterly hostile to its theories of government and its creeds. It seems to us a singular mixture of fanaticism, tyranny, cunning, and religion. Nor are we insensible of its many means of influence, and of the vast prestige with which it addresses itself both to the imagination and reason of men. Its venerable age, connecting it with the most ancient and splendid civilizations, Oriental, Grecian, Roman, and feudal, and surviving them all—its marvelous organization, combining the solidest strength with the most flexible activity, conciliating the wildest fanatical zeal with the coolest intellectual cunning, adapting it to every age, nation, and exigency, and enabling it to pursue its designs with continuous and varied forces—its imposing ceremonies and pantomimes, which seem like mummery to the stranger, but to the initiated are signs of the mighty conquests it has achieved over the mythologies, the rites, and the persecutions of antiquity, as well as promises of the consoling grace which will again sustain it, should the hand of the enemy drive it once more into the catacombs and the caves—its luxurious patron-

age of art, which has preserved to us so much of all that is best in the touching music, the lovely paintings, and the sublime cathedrals of the middle age—and, above all, the unquestionable ability of its priests, with the long line of noble and beautiful spirits—Abelards, Pascals, and Fenelons—who have illustrated history by their culture, their piety, and their genius—these are elements of greatness and power, which it would be folly as well as blindness in any one to overlook or deride. But, as we are convinced, also, that there are influences stronger than these—the influences of truth—of the soul of man—of the spirit of the age—of the providence of God, which has established a moral order in history, we are not dismayed by the amount of its ecclesiastical pretension, nor disheartened by any seeming facility or splendor in its temporary successes.

Least of all, shall we allow ourselves to be betrayed, by the chronic terrors of Protestants, into an unjust judgment of Catholics, and the consequent perpetration of political wrong. We are too familiar with the history of religious controversy, to be hurried away by the furious zeal

of agitators, who regard it as their special mission to arouse the world to a proper dread of the abuses of Popery. They are sincere, we have no doubt; but it is the sincerity of partisans, not of judges. They have worked their impatience of error up to that inflammatory pitch, where conviction becomes passion. Of tolerable self-complacency and quietude, in other respects, they are apt to be shaken out of their shoes when the subject of the "Scarlet Woman" is broached. It has all the effect upon them—we say it with reverence—of the red rag upon some imperious turkey, who, straightway, loses his solemn port and dignity, and rushes wildly to the battle.

Even the more temperate polemics, on the Protestant side of this controversy, do not always restrain their ardor at judgment-heat. Having convinced themselves that Rome—not ecclesiasticism in general, but the particular branch of it called Rome—is the great Anti-Christ of Scripture, they incontinently belabor her with every variety of scriptural reprobation. All the monstrous types of apocalyptic zoology, the beasts with seven heads and ten

horns, the red and black horses, the eagles, the calves, and the fiery flying serpents, are made to find in her their living resemblance, while she is loudly proclaimed to be the man of perdition, the mother of harlots, the mystic Babylon, who makes the nations "drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornications."*

It happens, unfortunately for the Church, that it is not difficult to give plausibility to these views, and, to some extent, a justification of such reactionary hatreds, from the records of history. Ecclesiastical annals (and the same is true, perhaps, of all other annals), tried by the standard of existing opinions, are so full of whatever is insolent in assumption, corrupt in morals, cunning and treacherous in fraud, and detestable in tyranny, that a mere tyro, with a case to make out, might draw pictures from them that would frighten a college of cardinals, and much more a conclave of credulous zealots. Dip into these annals anywhere, but especially

* In this application, however, of the great symbols of the Apocalypse to actual events, instead of spiritual truths, they have the illustrious precedent of Dante, Petrarch, Machiavelli, and some, even, who lived in the previous century.

into what relates to the doings from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries, and how much wickedness of every kind you meet! What audacity, licentiousness, superstition, ignorance, fraud, uproar, and cruel ferocity of persecution! The dread power of the Papacy seems to bestride those ages like a gigantic spectre of the Brocken. It rises before us as something awful, mysterious, and desolating. Removed, as we are by many generations, from the scenes of its action, we still see the flash of its lightnings, and still hear the roar of its thunders, as the bolts fall swiftly and terribly about the heads of emperors and kings. The air is sultry with a feeling of oppression; and the soul, in its recoil from the gloom and sorrow that darkens and sobs around it, loses all sense of the true proportions of things, and fancies that everything was evil then, and nothing good.

But, take up any party or principle, in an unfriendly spirit, to trace its affinities among the parties and principles of former times, and you may place it in similarly disreputable company. Thus, you may illustrate monarchy by the excesses of the Oriental kings, or the Ro-

man Cæsars; you may make aristocracy responsible for the nobles of the middle ages; and democracy for the peasant-wars and French revolutions of a later day. A person opposed to the Church of England, might say that it is still an unrepealed canon with her that papists and dissenters may be choked to death for their errors.* Another, opposed to Calvinism, would show Calvin, Beza, and Melancthon urging the incrimination of Servetus. A third would tell us of the Huguenots roasting papal priests, while they were themselves singed with the fires of St. Bartholomew; or of the Scotch parliament, with eight thousand Scotchmen dead at the hands of the Stuarts, decreeing death against the profession of Episcopacy; or, of the good Puritans, flying to the wilderness to escape and to establish spiritual despotism. In short, no sect or party can look with entire complacency upon the deeds of its ancestors, and no sect or party has a right to interpret the great lessons of history in a narrow, sectarian spirit.

Now, it seems to us, that the Catholics are

* See Arnold's *Miscellaneous Works*, page 188, Appleton's edition.

criticised too entirely in this one-sided way. Their opponents, drawing a drag-net through the impure streams of the middle-ages, bespatter them with all the rubbish that the cast brings up. It is forgotten that those ages were ages, in many respects, of the grossest barbarism and blindness; that anarchy and outrage reigned everywhere; that opinion was unformed, and authorities at war; and that if the conduct of the hierarchy, stretching across such long periods of general violence, exhibits much that is rapacious, cruel, and malignant, it was often redeemed by the valuable services which the same hierarchy rendered to the cause of learning, art, social discipline, popular progress, and European unity.

The representations, therefore, which dwell upon the evils of those times exclusively, are violent daubs or grotesque caricatures, and not historical pictures. They remind us of certain galleries in Italy, where the walls teem with fagots, stakes, gridirons, broiling martyrs, and a horrible array of distorted human anatomy, unrelieved by one sweet face, or a single smiling landscape.

We have no disposition to palliate the horrid deeds of ancient churchmen, nor to disguise the lessons of history; but we think that, at this late day, ecclesiastical battles might be fought with other weapons than those the illustrious Molly Seagrim used, when she drove her neighbors out of the sacred enclosure with thigh-bones, skulls, and bits of old tomb-stone. History is only instructive when it is read in the light of philosophy. Its events cannot be properly used as isolated facts, nor the characters it presents us judged of by the standards of modern opinion. Every age and nation must be viewed in its peculiar relations. Every age and nation has its own methods and its own ideas. The boy is not the man; the man of the ninth century is not the man of the nineteenth; and the etiquette of the court of Queen Victoria cannot be applied to the court of Queen Pomare. That which might have been good government, in one time and place, would be very bad government in another time and place; and a course of conduct which seems simply impudent and senile in Gregory XVI., may have been exalted and beneficial in Gregory VII.

These remarks, commonplace as they are, have an important bearing upon the particular question before us—the temporal power of the Popes—which is commonly treated as if the tenth and eleventh centuries could be revived, and old Hildebrand—true son of fire, as he was named—start again from the grave where he has rested nearly a thousand years. They forget that that power is no longer a present terror, but a simple historical phenomenon. It had its origin in the inevitable circumstances and necessities of society, at a particular stage of its progress, and, having served its ends, sometimes salutary, and sometimes quite otherwise, it has been dismissed by a kind Providence to the limbo of things not wanted on earth.

In illustration, let us refer to a few prominent historical facts, as to the origin and culmination of the papal power :

1. The foundation of every temporal or spiritual enormity, into which the Church was destined to run, was laid in the opinion, which early obtained, that Christ had founded an external institution, to be the medium of the new

and divine life. It was not only an unavoidable inference from this, in logic, that such a body should be supreme in its moral authority, but it was also an unavoidable practical deduction that the administrators of its ordinances should become among the most wealthy and powerful personages in secular society.

2. The conversion of Constantine added prodigiously to the temporalities of the Church, but, most of all, by conferring judicial and civil jurisdiction upon the bishops. His successors pursued the same policy, with some exceptions, and anybody who will read the Theodosian and Justinian codes, will see that the clergy, long before the fifth century, were in the possession of large patrimonies, were joined in the civil and financial administration of the provinces, were judges in the courts allowed to decree temporal penalties, and often took part in the imperial councils.

3. In the distribution of ecclesiastical rank, following generally the political divisions of the Empire, the preëminence fell, of course, to the See of the imperial city—the foremost city of the world. Its local position, fortified by

old renown, and the traditions of St. Peter's special favor, made it a centre of attraction and reverence to the faithful everywhere, but particularly to the churches among the barbarians, which its zeal had planted, and which were ever eager to testify their respect and submission to the venerable mother.

4. When the Empire was transferred to the East—an event that ought to have diminished the importance of the Roman Church—it happened that the distractions of the times turned that event into an occasion of its increasing power. The emperors, absorbed in their eastern troubles, left the Church almost the only authority in the western provinces. Their representatives, the miserable exarchs, for the most part plunderers and despots, could not rival the priests in the affections of the people. As the imperial authority grew weaker, therefore, the authority of the Roman Bishop grew stronger. The senate, as well as the populace, came to regard him as their true head; so that the Emperor, no longer able to control his affairs, and glad of the assistance of so eminent and influential a lieutenant, readily confirmed the pow-

ers which necessity, no less than general consent, had conferred.

5. When, finally, the Popes threw off the reins of the Emperors, and invited the King of the Franks to protect them from the savage incursions of the Lombards, it was clear that the Emperors were too weak to defend and retain the Italian provinces, and the exigency absolutely required an extraordinary intervention. The policy of Stephen II. and Adrian I., then, which gave great extension to the temporal sovereignty of the Popes, was quite inevitable under the circumstances. They stepped in to save society at a time when there was nobody else in a position, or having the will, to do so; and Pepin and Charlemagne, as the actual conquerors of the Lombards, when they confirmed, by solemn grants, the possessions of St. Peter, gave the only constitutional sanction, known to the laws of the epoch, to what was held by the more legitimate title of ability, virtue, service, and the tacit consent of the people.

6. In the midst of the turbulent and almost anarchical feudal society, the Pope appeared,

not only as a prince among princes, but as a prince superior to all princes, by virtue of his peculiar ecclesiastical eminence. He was naturally resorted to as an umpire in the settlement of disputes, and large fiefs were added to his jurisdiction, either to propitiate his favor or as a reward for distinguished services. As the laws of the Roman empire, moreover, had been principally retained in the monarchies which succeeded it, all the immunities and privileges of the clergy were preserved, and even extended, and their intimate association with the temporal power enlarged.

7. The Holy See, at once the centre of religion and learning, was also the only authority of any kind universally acknowledged. The princes, at war perpetually amongst themselves, each in turn invoked its aid against the encroachments of his neighbors. They were all equally solicitous to secure its favor, even to the extent of consenting to do homage for their kingdoms, as if they were held from the Pope. Nor were the Pópes, whose conduct exhibited a singular mixture of zealous piety and worldly ambition, backward in accepting a

vassalage tendered alike from motives of interest and devotion. In proof of the state of feeling, we may mention that, when the crusades came on, sovereigns and soldiers alike, regarding the Popes as the natural leaders of the great religious wars, often placed their persons and properties under their protection. Political affairs were arranged in the Pope's presence, treaties concluded, routes of march selected, and questions of precedence decided.

8. The right to depose princes, however, grew more directly out of the power of excommunication, which the Church had asserted from the earliest times. At first, this ban worked only a forfeiture of ecclesiastical rights, but after the sovereigns took the Church in hand, civil disabilities were attached to its infliction. The unhappy person who incurred it, was not only shut out of the assemblies of the faithful, and banished their society, but he was declared civilly dead, and his dignities, rights, and possessions, fell away from him, like leaves from a tree smitten by the lightning. All the legislation of the princes concurred in giving validity to ecclesiastical laws,

and in confirming the jurisdiction of bishops by civic penalties. When the Popes, therefore, insisting upon the impartiality of God's judgments, which could make no distinction between peasant and prince, applied the same ban to sovereigns which they applied to serfs, they exercised a power to which the sovereigns themselves had consented, and whose legitimacy they never questioned as to its general grounds, and only as to the justice of its application in the particular case.

Thus, innumerable circumstances in the political relations, the external events, and the moral opinions of the time, prepared the way for those tremendous assertions of supreme temporal sovereignty, which were begun by Gregory VII., in his deposition of Henry, and continued with vigor, for two or three centuries, by his successors. They are circumstances which do not wholly acquit the Popes of the charge of usurpation, but which yet show that their conduct was not, as it is often represented to have been, utterly indefensible. There was a color of law even for their most high-handed

interferences, sanctioned as they were by the political constitution of the age, no less than by its prevailing religious convictions.

On the other hand, as this system of conjoint spiritual and temporal authority had its rise in the circumstances of the time, so it found its fall in its own inherent weakness. Viewed absolutely, it was a violation of both reason and religion, and was only provisionally a good. At the height of its prevalence, it was already dissolving. Firstly, it could not escape reflecting minds, that every resort to force, direct or indirect, by a body professing a spiritual origin and genesis, was fundamentally inconsistent with its nature and end, and these minds were more or less openly at war with the policy of the Church. In the second place, the enormous wealth which flowed into its treasury, in consequence of its vast temporal sway, corrupted the clergy, and lost them the respect of the more severe and pure of their own order as well as that of the laics. And then, again, the possession of a great and almost uncontrolled power degenerates inevitably into a two-fold source of abuses; firstly,

in that it becomes a lure to all kinds of selfish and reckless ambition, and secondly, in that it gets impatient of resistance, and persecutes instead of persuading.

Accordingly, we see many examples of the operation of all these principles, before the opening of the fourteenth century, and which, indeed, kept pace with the growing domination of the hierarchy. Internal corruption and external outrage bred resistance, both within and without. When Boniface VIII. entered upon his contest with Philip le Bel, of France, he appeared to himself and to his friends to advance with all the strength of the great Gregory, while, in reality, the moral and popular support, which had been the strength of Gregory, had already collapsed. In the south of France, the infamous crusade against the Albigenses had detached a numerous and powerful body; similar disaffections had estranged the whole of Flanders; the thoughts which shortly after found vent in the immortal poem of Dante, the great father of Protestantism and the modern era, were fermenting in Italy; distant England was heaving with the birth of Wickliffe; and

the cultivators of ancient learning, even, had, in the silence of the monasteries, begun to manifest an abated respect for a clergy whose vices were as conspicuous as they were disgraceful. Boniface was, therefore, virtually defeated, and, in his defeat, the system itself received a fatal blow. Like one who came after him, he might have exclaimed that both he and his system had ventured too far upon the sea of glory, and were left—

“Weary and old with service, to the mercy
Of a rude stream, that must forever hide them.”

That stream was the awakening life of Christendom, inside and outside of the Church, which, dissolving the Papacy into the great and damaging “western schism,” gathered strength from the revival of literature, from the growth of the universities, from the republican experiments in Italy, from the Hussite rebellion, from the pragmatic sanctions of France, from the quickening activity of commerce, from the progress of maritime discovery, and the disclosures and inventions of science, until, finally, it broke over Europe, in a broad, full tide, as the Lutheran Reformation.

The Temporal Arm made, ever and anon, during the interval, spasmodic efforts to recover its ancient energy; but they were like the efforts of a serpent to strike, when its back is broken. For five centuries, now, its authority has steadily declined—nor will it ever be revived. We should as soon think of seeing Europe invaded again by the Arabs, or the Christian nations joined once more in a crusade to Jerusalem, or the philosophers of the world returning to the study of alchemy—as of beholding the rejuvenescence of the middle-age constitution of society, and of its foster-brother, the old Roman court. Even the religious influence of the Church, by which alone its temporal pretensions can be sustained, will never become again what it was before the Reformation.

It is true, as Mr. Macaulay, in his brilliant essay on Ranke's History of the Popes, has remarked, that the territorial division of Europe, between the Catholics and the Protestants, is the same now as it was towards the close of the sixteenth century; that the nations which were Catholic then—chiefly the Southern or

Romanic—are Catholic still ; and those which were Protestants then—chiefly the Northern or Teutonic nations—are Protestants still ; while neither Catholic nor Protestant has made any substantial gains in the large debatable ground in the middle of Europe. But this is true only geographically, as Macaulay himself more than intimates ; for while the physical frontiers of either camp have not advanced, their moral and intellectual advances respectively have been widely different. The leading Catholic nations, at the close of the sixteenth century, were Spain and Italy, and these have fallen into decay, whereas the leading Protestant nations, such as England and North Germany, have shot up prodigiously in every element of vigor. The nations which, before Luther, commanded the civilization of the world, were nations under the control of Rome ; but the nations which now occupy that exalted position, pursue their ends without a thought of the Church. England, North Germany, and the United States, are openly Protestant ; Russia, as the inheritor of Greek catholicity, is anti-Roman ; while France, though nominally

Catholic, is rather scientific than religious in her development, and is precisely the nation, under her renowned Gallic liberties, which most strenuously resists the papal predominance. Now, it is this superiority of the Protestant nations, in intelligence, activity, wealth, and freedom, which secures them forever from conquest, and which will, sooner or later, compel the Catholic nations to follow in their track. It is Protestantism which controls civilization and the future destiny of the world.

“But,” exclaim a thousand dissentient voices, in the face of this reasoning and all these facts, “Romanism, by its own showing, remains forever unchangeable and unchanged. Its prelates and its official organs adhere as tenaciously to the temporal supremacy of the Pope now as they did in the days of the Hohenstauffen and John Lackland; and, whenever, and wherever they can, will hasten to enforce its claims.”

We deny the truth of this position, and we scout the inferences which are attached to it, to frighten us out of our seven senses.

And, in the first place, we remark that this doctrine is not an established doctrine of the Catholic Church. It is simply a *sententia in ecclesia*—an unadjudicated question, without positive authority, and incumbent upon no one's faith. A Catholic may believe what he pleases on that subject, and yet be a good Catholic; he may utterly deny all manner of temporal allegiance to the Pope, and yet be a good Catholic; in short, the only allegiance expected of him, by the laws of the Church, is a belief of its dogmas, and a submission to its moral discipline.

In regard to the ground and extent of the temporal power of the Pope, two parties exist, and have long existed, in the Church. The first, the Ultramontane or theological party, contend that the Pope and Church have received, immediately from God, full power to govern the world, both in spirituals and temporals.* In its naked form, however, this theory, started by John of Salisbury, in the twelfth century, found but few advocates.

* Gosselin, on the Power of the Popes, vol. i., p. 360.

About the close of the sixteenth, therefore, Bellarmin, and other systematic writers, were obliged to modify it into this shape : That the Church has received from God, directly and immediately, no power over temporals, but over spirituals solely ; and that this power includes, *indirectly*, the power of governing temporals when the good of religion requires it, or in certain extraordinary cases, when it is rendered necessary for the salvation of souls. This is the sense in which the doctrine is held by most of the Ultramontanes, though some of them modify it still more, so as to restrict the right of the Church to a single right to *declare* the cases in which a sovereign has forfeited his authority, and subjects are absolved from their allegiance—as cases of conscience. But the Pope can use no direct means for enforcing this declaration, which can only be put in execution by the temporal order. Mr. Brownson, who is more obstreperous than anybody else in vindicating extreme opinions, denies that the Pope can interfere generally in the civil affairs of states, or resort directly to the strong arm. For that he must appeal to the civil

authority. "The Pope," he says, "does not make the law under which the prince holds, and can declare him deposed only when he has forfeited his rights by the law under which he still holds. The act of deposition is judicial, not legislative."

It is this indirect Ultramontaniam which is in the ascendant among the higher clergy and official organs of the Church. The Popes incline to it, because it extends their prerogatives; the college of cardinals favors it, because every cardinal expects some time or other to be Pope; the Jesuits, we believe, swear to it, and a majority of other religious orders receive it, together with many of the Spanish and Italian bishops, some of the German and French, and the leading journals—such as the *Civiltà Cattolica*, at Rome, the *Historische Politische Blätter*, of Germany, the *Univers* in Paris, the *Dublin Tablet*, and Brownson's *Quarterly*.

The second party, on the other hand, the Gallic or legist party, hold that the spiritual and temporal powers are equally sovereign in their respective spheres, and independent of each other; and that the Popes and Councils

which have interfered in the temporal affairs of states have done so, either under the human and constitutional laws of former epochs, or from an erroneous view of their duty. The Catholic clergy of France, in 1682, in the famous Declarations, which are the basis of the Cisalpine doctrine, said: "Kings and sovereigns are not subjected to any ecclesiastical power, by the order of God, in temporal things; and their subjects cannot be released from their obedience, nor absolved from their oath of allegiance." These declarations were eloquently defended by Bossuet. The six Catholic Universities, consulted by Pitt, in 1789—three Spanish, and three French—took this view, and earnestly declared that "neither the Cardinals, the Pope, nor even the Church herself, has any jurisdiction or power, by divine right, over the temporals of kings, sovereigns, or subjects," etc. The Irish committee, of 1792, made a similar deposition, in behalf of all the Catholics of Ireland, which was repeated before the House of Commons by all the Irish bishops in 1826. All the old Catholic families of England take this view, with a large num-

ber of the German and French bishops, and nearly all of those in the United States. As to the laity of the Church, they do not bother their brains much about the dispute; the more ignorant of them clinging to the Church because it has been their fathers' church, and the nursing-mother of their superstitions; and the more enlightened, because they find, in its doctrines and ceremonies, a genuine solace for their religious feelings.

We may regard the controversy, on the whole, then, as a kind of drawn battle—sometimes one party is in the ascendant and sometimes the other—the Ultramontanes seeming to carry the victory always in numbers, and the Gallicans always in argument; but, whether the one or the other prevail, it need be no cause to us either of extravagant alarm or extravagant joy.

For, in the second place, we remark, that, whatever may be the state of opinion among Catholics, the claim of the Popes to temporal power is not at all formidable, in the present condition of the world. Churchmen may conceit what they please about the unchangeable

nature of the Church, but the testimony of reason and history is that it does change, with its changes of place, and the advancing aspects of society. It is no more now, what it was when the monk of Clugni caused the poor German Emperor to wait his insolent leisure three days in the cold, than the Knights Templar are now what they were then. It is one thing at Berlin and London, and another at Valladolid or Bologna. The catechism which it circulates in France is not the catechism which it circulates in Portugal. Nor is this owing to policy alone. The force of circumstances, and the existing tone of manners and opinions, circumscribe and transform it, just as every other institution is modified by the medium in which it subsists. What the Papacy *would* be, then, if it *could*, is a question of no practical moment. What would any sect or party be, if unrestrained by adverse parties or sects? Sydney Smith well says: "One does not know the order or description of men in whom he would like to confide, if they *could* do as they *would*; our security consisting in the fact that the rest of the world won't let

'em." Now, the rest of the world will not allow the Pope, nor anybody else, to do as he pleases, let him want to ever so badly ; and, until the Pope, particularly, has reconverted the world to Catholicism, which will be a considerable undertaking, he may have as much will to thunder as he likes, but he will thunder in vain.

Consider the history of the papal attempts to exert even a limited temporal authority, during the last three centuries. The Pope rattled away, like a good fellow, against Louis XIV. ; but Louis was hardly civil to him, kissing his feet, as Voltaire says, but tying up his hands. He was dreadfully angry, again, with Philip V of Spain ; but he could not hinder Philip from going his own gait, nor prevent the Cortes, subsequently, from destroying the monastic institutions, and confiscating the Church property. He tried his power on Portugal, and was repulsed from Portugal, just as if it had been Protestant ; on Venice, and the Senate disdained his legate ; on Austria, whither he went personally, but was complacently bowed home again ; and on Napoleon, who laughed at him, and used him afterwards.

At the very moment, indeed, in which we pen this paragraph, the morning paper, fresh with foreign news, informs us that Spain—Catholic Spain, as she is called, by way of eminence—as she has been called these thousand years; where the Roman Church is the only church that has ever been recognized by the state, where a numerous and influential clergy are paid from the treasury of the State, where they enjoy the highest rank and consideration, where the entire people, in fact, are proud to hail their monarchs as Most Catholic Majesties—Spain, we say, has just passed a law, releasing property in mortmain, or, in other words, turning into money the consecrated lands and dwellings of the clergy and the religious orders, in the very teeth, too, of the Pope, and all his wire-workers and adherents.

Indeed, since the Restoration, when the allies complimented him with devout pretenses and apparent obsequiousness, but betrayed him to the State at the same time, not a government on earth, Catholic or Protestant, has treated his temporal holiness with a whit more decorum than is due to an illustrious prince—one among

the powers of Europe. They respect his important ecclesiastical position, and the venerable associations by which his See is surrounded, and, as far as their subjects are Catholic, are more or less tender of giving offense ; but they do not succumb one tittle to any right or claim of his to meddle with their civil interests. On the contrary, they resent it with a kind of porcupine irritability. One of the most recent Ultramontane writers, lamenting the desuetude into which the temporal arm has fallen, says, that the worst enemies which the Church has had to contend with, the last two hundred years, have not been either Protestants or Turks, but the professedly Catholic governments of Europe. “These nominal Catholic sovereigns,” he says lugubriously, “professing themselves to be sons of the Church, contributing, it may be, to the maintenance of the clergy, and to the pomp and splendor of worship ; perhaps, like Louis XIV., going so far as to tolerate no worship but the Catholic, and using their military force to suppress hostile sects, yet constantly encroaching on the ecclesiastical authority ; demanding concession after conces-

sion, and threatening universal spoliation and schism, if the Church does not accede to their peremptory demands, backed by the whole physical force of the kingdom, are really more injurious to the cause of religion, more hostile to the influences of the Church, than open and avowed persecutors, even the most cruel. We cannot name a single professedly Catholic State that has afforded, for these three hundred years, more than a momentary consolation to the Holy Father, whose bitterest enemies have been of his own household; while the only sovereigns in the eighteenth, and the first half of the nineteenth centuries, that treated him with respect, were sovereigns separated from his communion."

This is true: yet not the whole truth; for it conceals the worst feature of the papal degradation—that it is the willing tool and vassal of the kings. If it had been subjected simply by the superior force of its pseudo friends, there would have been reason for it to complain; but it cheerfully accepts the slavery. It is, at this moment, linked in with every despotism of the continent, lending itself to their most nefarious schemes; blessing the triumphs of their arms

over popular hopes, and proffering a servile submission to them in order to divide the ill-gotten gains wrung from the weakness, the ignorance, and the miseries of the people. Yes; the power, which of old sat in judgment upon the rulers of the earth, and, in its fierce contests with them, became a symbol of the aspirations and faith of the multitude, is now, divested of its ideal and representative character, and fallen from its own high schemes of superiority and jurisdiction, the passive partner of the secular princes; protesting, when it does protest, not against the political absolutism of the oppressor, but against the cries and struggles of the oppressed. It prefers the friendship of the Czar, even, with his foreign religion, to the political emancipation and religious regeneration of the nations; and is greatly more to be feared for the doctrines of abject submission to kings which it teaches, than for its imputed self-assertion.

But, if this be the condition of things in nations avowedly Catholic, how preposterous the alarm which is sounded as to the temporal aggressions of Popery in countries which are

wholly emancipated. Let us suppose, for instance—what is absurd in itself—that Pio Nono should take it into his head to hurl a bull at Queen Victoria, or General Pierce, for some gross heretical malfeasance, or for an insult to Cardinal Wiseman, or the legate Bedini, what would be the effect? A few of the more devout Catholics would be thrown into a flutter, others would mildly hint that the good Father had mistaken his business, while the world in general would explode in fits of derision. Historians might, perhaps, recall the time when such missives closed the churches, extinguished the sacrifice on the altar, suspended christenings and marriages, covered the images of the saints in mourning, silenced the bells in the towers, left the dead unburied, and dressed whole nations in sackcloth and ashes; but they would recall it as a striking homily on the mutability of human affairs—while the great body of the people would go about their pursuits, eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, as utterly unconscious that anything had occurred, as a deaf man is of the snapping of a pistol behind his back.

Of all the nations of the earth, ours is the last in which the temporal pretensions of the Pontiff, supposing them to be still cherished, will make any headway. The democratic principle, of the right of the people to manage their own affairs, is so thoroughly ingrained in our whole political life, that fire will not burn, nor water drown, it out of us. We should a great deal rather attempt to take Sebastopol with pop-guns, than to convert this nation to an acquiescence in the old monarchical and religious tyrannies. Individuals of recusant sympathies will, of course, now and then take shelter under the wings of the Pope; Catholicism, as a religion, will gain converts from time to time; but, as a political power, it will find the current ever setting more strongly the other way. Rome is far more likely to become American, under the influences at work here, than America Roman. Not a single trait of American character, as it has been thus far developed, harmonizes with the genius of that court—not a habit of thought, or mode of action, peculiar to our people, is cast in its moulds—and there is no point or feature of our civil procedure coin-

cident with the structure of its government or the aims of its polity. We are drifting further and further away, with the current of the years, not only from Rome, but from every vestige of ecclesiasticism. Our religion is less ritual, day by day, and more and more civic and personal. Our literature, our practical enterprise, our actual political tendencies, in short, all the agencies of our civil and moral life, turn towards a practical humanity, as the flower and fruit of Christ's blessed redemption of us, and will not return. The immense Irish emigration, which was once supposed to threaten, though it never actually molested, our safety, has reached its height, and now begins to slacken. Already the preponderance of numbers among the emigrants has passed over to the Germans, among whom Popery sits lightly upon those who receive it, and is more than neutralized by the desperate rationalistic bias of the rest. Strauss and Feuerbach, we suspect, are the saints of the Germans, who will give our Puritan theologians more trouble than all the saints of the Romish calendar; and the creed of no-creedism will seduce a larger number

of professors than the creed of spiritual submission.

We shall not dwell upon the inexpressible meanness of excluding all foreigners from political life, because a number of them happen to be Catholics—Catholics from religious association and conviction, and not in the interests of a political propagandism—but we shall urge one simple thought: that, supposing foreigners to be all Romanists, the way to rescue them from their error is, not to inclose them, by an outward pressure or proscription, into a narrow circle of their own, but to tempt them out of the fatal ring, into a freer air. If their communion be haunted by foul superstitions and fanaticisms, as sometimes an old decaying structure is haunted by bats and owls, you will not purify it by closing the shutters and keeping them in darkness. It is in darkness, precisely, that owls and bats live. But let in the light of heaven upon them, let the brisk wind drink up the clammy damps, let the fresh, warm sun quicken the benumbed and torpid limbs, and the bats and owls will fly away; for the place will be no longer congenial to their habits.

It is a great fact of experience, that, where Protestants and Catholics are brought openly together, Catholicism is softened and liberalized—as in all the frontier districts of Europe—while it retains whatever of evil it may possess, in the most unmitigated forms, in the most secluded districts. Nay, both parties are improved by the association. How much, in England, France, and Germany, have the old hostilities been tempered by the common medium in which they are diffused! while in Sweden, Protestantism, and in Portugal, Spain, and parts of Italy, Catholicism, still exhibit the same hard features which they wore a hundred years ago. Just in proportion as Catholics are permitted to share in the civil life of Protestant nations, they have thrown off the old prejudices of creed, and begun to identify themselves with the general feelings and tendencies of the rest of the people.

In our own country, particularly, the beneficent and beautiful operation of democracy is seen, in the silent and gentle influences by which it removes the old enmities of sect and race. The slough of a thousand errors, which once hissed like so many serpents in the bosom

of society, has been cast, we scarcely know how ; deep hatreds, which still burn in Europe with intensest zeal, dividing classes irreparably, are extinguished here as if by the falling dews ; and a genial glow of common sentiments and feelings, warms into a higher, nobler humanity the hearts of men, no longer curdled into petty spites or rancorous animosities by hostile divisions of privilege and interest. Let us beware, then, that we do not arrest or thwart this glorious development ! Let us be worthy of the lofty destiny to which we have been called !

If we think the dogmas of the Roman Church grievous errors ; if we think its policy unfriendly to intellectual freedom and to republican government ; if we should be sorry to see it more generally accepted ; let us be sure that its corruptions, whatever they may be, are to be met by argument and the force of opinion only, and not by legislation. Our fathers, with a wisdom as divine as was ever vouchsafed to any conclave or synod, decreed an eternal separation of Church and State. They forbade the use of religious tests, in the decision of civil rights, and that prohibition is sound in spirit as well

as letter. We hope that the American people will never depart from it; we hope that they will continue to exhibit to the world an exalted example of true charity; and we are assured that, so long as they refuse to allow transient prejudices and local irritations to provoke them from its kindly dictates, the heavenly Father, whose essence is goodness, will richly endow them with every needed blessing.

JUNE, 1855.

THE GREAT QUESTION.

IN the year 1850, it was decreed by conventions of the Whig and Democratic parties, representing three-fifths, at least, of the people who concern themselves with politics, that the compromise measures were a final settlement, "in principle and in substance," of the question of slavery. Mr. Webster, who had contributed so much talent and reputation to their success, as he drew near his death, congratulated himself, and the country, that there was then no part of the territory of the United States in which this subject had not been disposed of by positive law. The President of the nation, even, in his first message, was impelled to speak of those measures as having "given renewed vigor to our institutions, and restored a sense of repose and security to the public mind throughout the confederacy ;" and he promised that this "repose should suffer no

shock if he had power to avert it, during his administration.”

Yet, those measures had scarcely been promulged, their great advocate of Massachusetts was hardly cold in his grave, the President himself was but warm in his chair, when the agitation of the slavery question broke forth anew, with a universality and earnestness of feeling never before equaled. Slavery became at once the real and vital question of the day. It vibrated in every heart, and burned on every tongue. Older issues were dropped in the intense excitement it occasioned; the ancient rallying cries, once so potent in marshaling the electoral lieges around the standards of their leaders, grew as charmless as the blasts of fish-horns, and the freshest of political frenzies, the Know-nothing excitement, which, a year before, swept over the land like a torrent, was arrested and broken into foam by the opposing waves of this greater agitation. The hopes of a long era of political quiet, engendered by the reconciling action of Congress and the conventions, were dashed to the ground, and the flames of former feud, extinguished for a brief time,

were kindled once more into a livelier energy and glow.

But there is a peculiarity in the revived commotion, which it is impossible not to remark. During the earlier periods of anti-slavery excitement, it was mainly confined to men of ardent temperaments and extreme opinion, to abolitionists, strictly so-called; but, as things are now, it is shared by men of tempered and conservative disposition. The cautious and the wise—heads silvered over with age, and hearts which experience has taught to beat in measured pulses—are joined with more enthusiastic spirits in a common cause. It is, indeed, no exaggeration to describe the feeling at the North as general. If we except the small joint-stock association which draws the udders of the federal government, and a score or two of effete politicians, who, like the elder Bourbons, forget nothing and learn nothing, there is not a thinking man among us who is not absorbed in this topic of the domination and spread of slavery.

Whence this change? Why are the halcyon expectations, which gathered about the compromises as a halo, dispersed? Why are minds,

the least quick to catch the impulses of the times, carried away by a prevailing sentiment? Why are they compelled into coalition with those for whom, a little while ago, they felt no sympathy, and whose plans of policy they disapproved? Is it that the hereditary anti-slavery sentiment of the North has received some new and mysterious access of violence, like a fever which recurs in a more malignant type? Is it that the people of the North have been suddenly seized with some irrational animosity towards their brethren of the South, and rush forward, blindly, to the perpetration of an unprovoked injustice? Not at all. There is nothing thoughtless or unkind in the recent movement. It is a legitimate fruit of circumstances—a natural and normal development of events, which any sagacious student of cause and effect might have predicted, and which, indeed, was predicted by many in the deepest lull of 1850.

In the first place, there can be no finality in politics, except in the establishment of justice and truth. Where society is divided on a principle, and that principle involves, besides its

moral issues, vast practical interests, no parliamentary device or legislative expedient can put a stop to the discussion of it—no compromising adjustment of it can settle it forever. The very attempt to settle it, in this way, though it may succeed in quelling an existing vehemence of agitation, will, in the end, provoke a more vehement reaction. For the mind of man is, in its nature, vital and irrepressible ; you may force it down but you cannot keep it there ; its inherent elasticity will cause it to spring back, and in that spring, perhaps, it will tear into shreds the cords by which it was bound. When the compromisers of 1850, therefore, undertook to suppress the discussion of slavery, they undertook what was plainly impossible ; and much of the exacerbation which has since arisen must be referred to a natural revolt against that impracticable enterprise.

But, in the second place, there is to be remarked a special cause for the late outbreak of anti-slavery feeling, and particularly for its appearance among those classes which have not heretofore manifested a strong tendency in that direction. It is this : that a gigantic fraud

has been committed in the name of slavery, which has aroused a keen sense of wrong, and filled the dullest understandings with apprehensions for the security of our future liberties. The Kansas-Nebraska bill—which repealed the Missouri Compromise, sprung like a trap, as it was, upon a Congress not chosen in reference to it; hurried through the forms of legislation, under whip and spur, by a temporary majority; alleging a falsehood in its very terms, and having the seizure of a vast province, secured to freedom by thirty years of plighted faith, as its motive—was the fatal signal which, after astounding the nation by its audacity, rallied it to battle.

A few months before this repeal was perpetrated, the very abettors of the transaction had pronounced it impossible. The committee of the Senate which reported it, had pronounced it impossible. Not a man in the Union but would, at that time, have pronounced it equally impossible, had his opinion been asked; yet it was repealed by the simple declaration, which all the world knew to be untrue, that it had been rendered inoperative by the legislation of

1850 ! Marvelous assurance, but still more marvelous success !

We shall not inquire here whether the Missouri Compromise was originally proper or not ; averse as we are to compromises in general, we are not sure that it would not have been better for all sides to have settled the dispute at that time on a basis of principle, and at all hazards ; but, inasmuch as the South had reaped its share of the benefit proposed by the bargain—inasmuch as its continuance involved, to a considerable extent, the good faith of the South, we are clear that the disturbance of it by the South was neither honorable nor wise. In accepting the responsibility of the deed, it has both lost an opportunity and committed a fault. Had it spurned the offer of the territories, when it was made, it would have achieved a moral triumph far more valuable to it than any other immediate success can be. But the virtue of its representatives was not equal to the occasion—the spirit of Henry, Wythe, Macon, Jefferson, was not theirs. Or had it, after the act was consummated in Congress, withheld its approval, and manifested a willingness to allow the North

a fair chance in the appropriation of land, so long consecrated to freedom by its own consent, there would have been a color of equity in its proceedings, which would have gone far in tempering the horror and reprobation which the original offense provoked. But here again the South proved unworthy of its opportunities. It has sustained and abetted the lawless invasion of Kansas, by the armed marauders of Missouri. It has sent thither its agents, or allowed them to go—which is the same thing—in order to subjugate the peaceful settlers, and to impose a peculiar social system upon them against their will. The Kansas Legislature, acting in the name of the South, is a usurping body. The people of Kansas, overruled by violence at the elections, are not its constituents. It reflects no popular sovereignty, only the sway of the mob ; and they who support its cause support the ascendancy of the bowie-knife and the rifle over the ballot-box and the law.

Under this condition of facts and events, it was very natural that public opinion at the North should be stung into a keen and vivid resentment. Averse as it may have been to

any interference with the internal relations of the South ; willing, as it has shown itself, to accept any settlement of difficulties which did not involve an actual approval of the Southern system ; hoping that, under a geographical demarcation of the respective regions of slavery and freedom, the causes of dispute would be gradually supplanted by the advancing enterprise, if not by the Christianity and democracy, of the nation—or be reduced, at least, to the smallest possible surface of contact—it has yet been able to discover in that repeal, and in the conduct by which it has been followed up, nothing less than a rooted determination to extend the peculiar social usages of the South over the whole West, in the face of contracts and laws, and to the exclusion of freedom. How then, in the name of humanity, could the North listen to the avowal, or witness the incipient steps in the execution of such a scheme, without loudly protesting against it, and resolving to resist it to the end ?

The repeal of the Compromise was the practical triumph of a party which is the worst in its principles, and the most dangerous in its

designs, of any party that ever arose in the Republic. We refer to the propagandists of slavery, whose unquestionable purpose it is to rule the Union, if they can, and if they cannot, to set up a southern slave confederacy for themselves. They are few in numbers as yet, though great in influence; but they have of late grown rapidly in both, and will be prodigiously strengthened by success in Kansas.

Let us sketch the rise and progress of certain sentiments, briefly, in order to show the bearing of their schemes.

When the Constitution of the United States was formed, slavery existed in nearly all the States; but it existed as an acknowledged evil, which, it was hoped, the progress of events would, in the course of a few years, extinguish. With the exception of South Carolina, there was not a State in which some decided efforts had not been made towards its alleviation and ultimate removal. It was this feeling, that it was an evil, and that it would soon be abated, which excluded all mention of slavery by name from the Constitution, and which led to the adoption of such a phraseology, in the parts refer-

ring to the subject, that they do not necessarily imply its existence. The Constitution was made for all time, while the makers of it supposed slavery to be but a transient fact, and the terms of it consequently were adapted to the larger purpose, and not to the temporary exigency. A jurist from the interior of China, who knew nothing of the actual condition of our country, or Justinian, could he arise from the dead, would never learn, from the mere reading of that instrument, of the existence of slavery. He would read of "persons held to service," and of certain "other persons," who were to be counted only as three-fifths in the distribution of representative population; but he would never imagine them, unless expressly told, a species of property. The general sentiment was averse to slavery, and the men of the Revolution were unwilling to recognize it, except in an indirect and roundabout way, and then only, as they expected, for a limited period.

For many years subsequent to the Revolution, a similar feeling prevailed throughout the South as well as at the North. The most in-

tense expressions of disapproval that have ever been uttered against the system, may be quoted from the writings of those who were born and brought up under it: and whenever it was defended, it was defended on the ground, not that it was right, or even desirable, but that it was inevitable. "It is fastened upon us," said the South, "and we must do the best with it that we can. We are like men in a morass, who cannot spring at once to the firm land, but who must work their way thither, gradually, as they are able. We trust that Providence has some good end in thus afflicting us—what it is we do not see—we discover certain incidental goods in our strange relations; but we must look to God to justify his own dealings to us in this wretched business." This was the pervading tone; few regarded slavery as anything less than a curse, and none held it to be a permanent condition. As for the domestic trade in slaves, it was generally execrated. John Randolph, as late as 1816, denounced it, on the floor of Congress, as "heinous and abominable," "inhuman and illegal," and Gov. Williams, of South Carolina, spoke of it in one

of his messages as “a remorseless and merciless traffic,” the result of “insatiable avarice,” condemned “by enlightened humanity, wise policy, and the prayers of the just.”

But the rapid extension given to the cotton trade, by the contrivance of the gin, and by the manufacturing industry of Great Britain, produced a vast change in the opinions of the country. As the slave system spread, and the hopes of its ultimate extinction diminished, it was found necessary by the slaveholders, in order to justify to their own consciences their adherence to it, and to shelter their conduct from the indignant censure of the world, to invent some plea which should be plausible at least, if not well-founded. In pursuance of this need, they resorted to the Bible to show that slavery was divinely allowed, and could not be, therefore, in itself, wrong. They ransacked physiological science, to establish the inferiority of the black race, and the consequent duty of protecting it, and educating it to labor. They began to interpret the designs of Heaven, contending that slavery was to be made an instrument in raising the enslaved Africans to a know-

ledge of the industrial arts and Christianity, and in the subsequent civilization, through them, of the vast continent from which they were originally taken.

All this reasoning, however, implied no more than a temporary state of slavery, making it probationary or propædæutic, and not justifying it as a final or permanent condition. The motives assigned in apology for it, looked to the future redemption of the slave, to his improvement in the methods of civilized life, and of course to his restoration to a condition in which those methods would avail himself and his race.

A sterner logic was required to meet the difficulties of the problem, which was nothing less than the reconciliation of a selfish interest to universal conscience—at all times a most embarrassing affair. If slavery were right because only of its probable and ultimate benefits to the slave caste, the inference could not be avoided that the time must come when that caste, or the superior portions of it, at least, might be emancipated. The opponents of the slaveholders might justly taunt them, on their

own premises, for continuing the system beyond the period requisite for the fulfillment of its alleged purposes. They might reasonably demand that some definite term be put to the time of this educationary discipline; that the system, in fact, should be resolved into a species of apprenticeship; and that the lot of its enforced beneficiaries should be illuminated by some hope or prospect, however distant, of final release. For of what use to the slave, or to his race, would be an education protracted to the hour of his death? Education is a means to some end, and where the end is withheld, the means is worthless. How were negroes, taught the social arts here, to benefit their fellows in Africa, if they were to be held here in perpetual bondage? Why teach them knowledge, which, in raising them individually above their original savageness, could only render them more keenly sensible that their out-look embraced no future?

It was hard for the slaveholders to reply, and so the bolder among them shifted their grounds. They began to aver that slavery was a good in itself—that it was the natu-

ral relation of the two races—that negroes could never be anything more, by the fiat of God, than the servants of the white man; and that a society, constructed upon this arrangement, in which the inferior should do all the work, and the superior exercise the protection and guidance (beside enjoying the best fruits), was the truest and happiest society that could be conceived. It was a heaven-ordained socialism—thoroughly articulated and organized, effective and economical as an industrial machine—benevolent as a provision for the poorer classes, so woefully overlooked in other societies, ample in its furniture of motives and means for the ripest culture in the higher classes, and rendering the interchanges of life between different ranks, whose interests are radically united, a perpetual reciprocation of gratitude, affection, and care.

With this change in opinion, from despairing lament or feeble apology to positive vindication, came a corresponding change in practice, from defense to aggression. While the greater part of the slaveholders accepted the glorifying view of their system merely as a politic reaction

against the bitter reproaches of the civilized world, or as a pleasant *couleur de rose* dream-land, into which imagination might escape from the too painful reality, there were others, more daring spirits, with whom argument was action, and of whom it might be said—

“——Straightforward goes
The lightning's path, and straight the fearful path
Of the cannon-ball.”

Without caring a whit for the right or wrong, the good or evil of slavery, or of anything else, and animated mainly by an insatiable thirst for power and gain, they found it exceedingly convenient to adopt the philanthropic theory. They eagerly embraced the premises, and more eagerly shot to the conclusion. Slavery is a good thing, a desirable thing, a benefaction and heaven's blessing to all concerned, and *ergo*, ought not to be restricted, but diffused ! There was the whole question ! Why limit so excellent a social institution to the few States that are now basking in its genial beams ? Why not spread the benefits of it over the North ? Why be so cruel as to withhold it from the poor benighted Territories, or from languish-

ing Mexico, or from the wilderness shores of the Amazon? Or why shut off its natural supplies from the teeming founts of Congo and the Gold Coast?

They were consecutive reasoners, you see, these fellows, and practical men, besides; and accordingly, they set to work to remodel both the principles and practices of the South. Exploding the old democratic creed, that man had inherent and inviolable rights, which had been the inspiring faith of the glorious days of the Revolution, and trampling down the once cherished conviction of the sovereign supremacy of the States, within their own jurisdiction, they proclaimed that only a particular race of men had rights, that the States were nothing more than departments, that slavery was the one supreme and universal interest, and that it might go everywhere and determine every question. Brave propagandists! It was to you we owed the breaking down of all old and sacred distinctions, to you we owed our wars for the acquisition of new land—to you the spirit of encroachment and aggrandizement which is abroad—to you the filibustering ex-

peditions which disgrace our name—to you the fugitive slave law, which would convert free-men into bloodhounds—to you the incessant agitation of slavery, and an insolence which hangs the fate of the Union on a constant subservience to its behests! and now, as the latest step in this career of conquest, as the very *coup de grace* to our national freedom and the independence of the States, comes this erasure of an ancient landmark, which had stood for thirty years, like a long line of coast, against which the black billows dashed themselves only to be broken! Grant this triumph and where will you stop? On what remote boundary of our possible empire, in what era of unknown time will your god Terminus erect his altar? Whither shall we fly to escape your frowns, where look for a rescue from your abhorrent domination?

It must not be forgotten, however, that this small but desperate and determined knot of propagandists would never have achieved the influence they have, if the political parties of the country had maintained their primitive rectitude and honor. Had they continued to fight

as Washington and Franklin fought, as Jefferson and Adams and Madison fought, for principles and not small expediençies, there is no local faction that could have made head against them for any length of time. But with success comes relaxation ; with victory, indulgence ; with prosperity and power, corruption. Our parties, once having tasted the luscious spoils of office, made them the end of their life. They lost the stringency and sternness of conviction, the nobleness and purity of purpose, in which they began. They were debauched ; they fell into the hands of men of small ambitions and cold hearts ; their creeds became the merest hodge-podge of contradictory maxims, and their conduct a series of contemptible shifts, and doublings, and prostitutions.

A late foreign writer, observing from an impartial stand-point the aspect of our affairs, says that “ Few things have more surprised the world than the deterioration of the political men of America. When the United States were a mere aggregate of scantily-peopled colonies, when their principal citizens were planters, shop-keepers, and traders, trained up in

the narrowness, and prejudices, and petty employments of provincial life, they produced statesmen and negotiators, and administrators and legislators whose names will be forever illustrious in history. Now that they form a great empire, that they possess a large class of men born in opulence, to whom all the schools and universities of each hemisphere are open, who have leisure to pursue the studies and to acquire the habits of political life, few of their public men would pass in Europe for tolerable second-rates." What other conclusion could he draw, when the chair of Washington and Jefferson has come to be occupied by a Tyler and a Pierce, and the diplomacy of a Franklin and an Adams is represented by that of a Soulé and a Borland? Yet the decay of leaders would be nothing, were there no evidences of a similar degeneracy in the spirit of society, which unfortunately happens to be the case. Our civil life exhibits an almost universal demoralization; there is scarcely a party among us which holds to any consistent theory of government or law, or which can enunciate two principles that are not utterly incompati-

ble—while political presses, public documents, speeches in Congress, and even the discourses of the pulpit, are filled with arguments, appeals, and denunciations, which show an utter abandonment of the foundation-principle of our nation. A gross materialism, the success of trade, the progress of gain, an external expediency, is preferred to lofty ideal aspirations and spiritual truth. The grand and beautiful theory which lies at the centre of our institutions, their noble humanitarianism, their just and magnanimous recognition of the worth of every human being, their utter disdain of the spirit of caste, of exclusion, of selfish aggrandizement—no longer touch our hearts, and kindle them into a fine enthusiasm. Great deeds are not done among us. The atmosphere around us is cold, and ungenial. We speculate how to get rich; we build railroads and ships, to increase our stores; we spy out the neighboring lands which promise us luxurious harvests hereafter; we return the panting fugitive to his life-long doom; but the heroic virtues, the chivalric sentiments, the sweet, and tender, and self-forgetful impulses, which constitute the true and only glo-

ries of manhood, we lay aside, forgetting them, even in our prayers. "Oh! reverence," says the poet, "the dreams of thy youth!" but the fair dreams of our youth we despise. The dream that this young land, fresh from the hands of its Creator, unpolluted by the stains of time, should be the home of freedom and a race of men so manly that they would lift the earth by the whole breadth of its orbit nearer heaven, that it should be a light to the struggling nations, holding on high, forever, the standard of justice and humanity, and supplanting the despotism under which mankind had withered, by a rich, and noble, and free republican civilization, has passed away from the most of us as nothing but a dream. We yield ourselves, instead, to calculation, money-making, and moral indifference. The prophet of the Lord might again cry in our streets, "How is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed!"

It is a dark view of things we have taken; not darker than circumstances warrant, and yet not altogether hopeless. Behind the foul and earth-born mists overspreading the lower skies, glimpses are to be had of a fairer heaven.

Behind the mean and sordid life of politics, shutting out the sunshine for a time, there is a great, true life, which may yet redeem this people. At the South there are many noble, Christian souls, who have not been withered by the blight of slavery, and to whose generous impulses the creed of the vulgar propagandists is as repugnant as the creed of the pirate. They have thought too long and earnestly of the evil they suffer, to disguise its character, and they are too kind and just in sentiment, to wish to impose it on others. In their prayers and struggles against it, lies the hope of a better issue to the awful question than is contained in the violent solution of the more active men by whom they are, for the present, silenced and overborne. It is to their wisdom and piety that we look for a brighter future. Nor at the North are we wholly given up to the idolatry of "Timour-Mammon." Scattered over the broad inland are thousands upon thousands of cheerful homes, which nurture a race to whom the heavenly law, and not the earthly greed, is the rule of duty. They retain the simple honesty, the masculine vigor, the love of liberty

and of God, which came to them from the stern old republican stock of England, from those who fought with Cromwell, and read John Milton. Indeed, in no nation of the world do we believe that more intelligent, upright, self-sacrificing and energetic men and women are to be found than in this—where the best culture of Europe is so widely diffused, where religion is so free and so active, and where the sweet influences of woman are so heartily accepted. But the misery is, that these virtuous and redeeming classes have been elbowed by the politicians, and their rude herd, into obscurity. Shrinking from the clamor, and meanness, and ribaldry of political exertion, they have retired with disgust into their cottages and fields, into their stores and workshops, into their parlors and libraries, and they have thus left the arena free for the gladiators and the wild beasts, who, having mauled and torn each other, turn at last to rend the innocent citizen, and to desolate the peaceful home.

We conceive that in pointing out the two evils to which we have referred, namely, the aggressions of slavery and the corruption of

parties, we have struck upon the very mother sins of our career. They are the sources to which may be traced every error and iniquity that we have fallen into : not only external offenses against honor and justice, such as Texan forays, and Cuban freebooting, but the deeper inward debasement—the decay and meanness of spirit, which could submit to fugitive slave laws, and other outrages, the most insulting ever inflicted upon a free people ; and it will be impossible to retrieve the past until the mighty stream of influences which they pour forth is stopped. Unless there is integrity, self-respect, and decision enough in our society to arrest these gangrenes, they will spread until they have corroded the whole body. Unless there is moral vitality in our heart sufficient to assert itself against the powerful poisons already in the blood, we may be sure that the circulation will carry them soon to every member, till there shall be no health nor life in us.

But these two evils are in reality one—or are, at least, reciprocally cause and effect of each other, inasmuch as they have both the same origin—the departure of the nation, in

feeling and practice, from the idea in which it was founded. Nations, like man himself, have certain ends or ideals of existence, which constitute the inmost ground or essence of their being, and when they depart from these, they either degrade themselves into some lower form, or grow into monsters. Men who cease to be men, become either animals or fiends. Nations, which lose their constituent principles, fall into barbarism, or rush into some diabolic fury. Their salvation lies alone in their adherence to the great thought which gave them their original organic unity.

Now, the great thought, the fundamental idea, the constituent principle of our nationality, was the liberty of all men, secured by equal laws, and defended from invasion, either on the part of the state or of individuals, by the whole power of the state. The peculiarity of organization by which this liberty was made sure, was that distribution of power whereby every mature locality was rendered free and supreme in whatever concerned itself solely, yet coöperative in more general spheres, so that there was a perfect equilibrium in the centripë-

tal and centrifugal forces of government, as in the solar system. The great object of the arrangement was the security, the elevation, the freedom of the individual, who, regarded as the child of God, as the joint heir with others of the earth, as an immortal spirit, capable of an infinite growth in love, and truth, and beauty, was too sacred not to be hedged round by every defense, and helped forward by every kind nurture and care. He was the Prince of the Great King, for whom all the granaries were to be filled, and all the treasures displayed, and all the bells to ring out a joyous welcome.

We must return to our fundamental principles, to our primitive spirit, to the noble and manly moral tone, which made us giants in our youth, if we would not dwindle into dwarfs. No single measure of improvement, nor series of measures, can help us, if we do not recover, along with them, the old inward health and soundness. A restoration of the Missouri Prohibition, for instance, at which so many aim, though important as a sign of repentance, and as a restitution for wrong done, would be, in itself,

but a first step towards the infinitely greater end, the regeneration of the mind of the people on the subject of slavery. There will be no peace, nor purity, nor noble vigor, until, as a federation, we shall have discharged ourselves of all responsibility for a system vitally at war with its objects. The separate states have a larger and more difficult task, and they must stand or fall by their fidelity to its duties; they must struggle with their own burdens; we cannot help or relieve them, except by their own consent; but the confederacy has but one single, plain, and inevitable course. It must be free! how wildly soever interested factions may rage against the attempt to recover the ground that has been lost, deep and wide as are the delusions which are to be scattered, painful as may be the process of healing, even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, the Republic must be free! The dearest memories of the past, the saddening aspects of the present, the hopes of the future, alike proclaim it as the imperative law of duty for us of the present day, that the Republic must be free. As in days of yore—

“Hills flung that cry to hills around,
And ocean-mart replied to mart,
And streams, whose springs were yet unfound,
Pealed far away the startling sound.
Into the forest’s heart.”

So let it be again flung abroad till every stain is wiped from our soil, and the recreancy of our hearts retrieved.

There is a time in the history of nations, as there is in the life of the individual, and as there was in the life of Christ, when the Devil carries them up into a high mountain, and offers them all the kingdoms of the earth if they will but worship him. At such a time have we arrived in our national career. The spirit of evil points us to the vast outlying regions of the globe, and he promises that all these shall be ours, with riches, and power, and glory, if we will but covet them, and take them, and think no more of the other spirit, which only whispers in sadness to our inmost soul, that goodness is better than wealth, that truth is greater than power, and that the beauty of a humane and benignant life is the brightest glory of man. Let us beware how we choose!

NORTHERN OR SOUTHERN, WHICH?

THE recent exciting and protracted contest, as to the organization of Congress, was significant, in more respects than one. It was a topical symptom of a general state, showing a large amount of derangement, and yet a tendency to recuperation.

We saw the representatives of the people brought to a complete deadlock by the antagonism of parties, each pulling a different way, with no one strong enough to prevail, and no two, seemingly, ready to coalesce. For two months, nearly, the usual course of legislation was suspended on the settlement of a preliminary dispute as to the Speakership.

Yet the House of Representatives was never more truly representative than in this temporary paralysis of its functions; for the whole nation is in pretty nearly the same predicament. Its politics are decussated, if we may

use the expression, not by well-defined parties, but by numerous opposing factions. Their conflicts, but for the seriousness of the subjects involved, would exhibit as droll a spectacle as Marryatt describes in his triangular duel. The Republicans, taking a pistol in either hand, fire away at the Democrats and the Americans; the Americans, doing the same, fire at the Republicans and the Democrats; while the Democrats, again, discharge their pieces at the Americans and the Republicans. Everybody shoots at everybody else; and everybody, let him aim in whatever direction he will, is sure to aim at an enemy, who is also aiming at him, thus rendering the exposure equal, and the chances of sudden disaster somewhat even.

It was evident, however, during the struggle in the House, in spite of the seeming and superficial differences of opinion among the several factions, that there was, radically, but a single issue. Each member felt, as he gave his vote for this or that candidate, though he was not always ready to avow it, that the turning-point of all was, the question of slavery. All the other questions, which may

have operated in forming little knots of voters, were incidental, or aside, like the small eddies which whirl about in the very current of the principal vortex. Banks and Aiken were the leaders of the hosts between which the real battle was fought, while they who shouted for Fuller, Zollikoffer, and what not, were only deserters from the main ranks, or camp-followers and marplots.

Nor were leaders ever chosen with more instinctive wisdom, considering the peculiarity of their relations to this predominant issue. Mr. Banks was a man of the people, who had risen by his own efforts from an humble mechanical occupation to a high political office; while Mr. Aiken was a slaveholder, one of the wealthiest of his class, endowed with all the better qualities of that class, and as sincere as he was strong in his geographical convictions. Mr. Banks represented the State of Massachusetts—itself the best example of a free condition of society to be found on the face of the earth; while Mr. Aiken represented South Carolina—long distinguished as the ablest exponent of both the opinions and the influences

of the slave-civilization. In these champions, the two social systems of the North and South were pitted against each other, and, for the first time so openly and directly, in the history of our national existence.

In the same way, the nation, in the midst of the parties and agitations by which it is distracted, recognizes the fundamental and vital question to be that of slavery. Wink it out of sight as we may, or complicate it as we may, it cannot be disguised, that slavery is the single real element of party divisions. Openly or secretly, it controls the action of all parties. They come together, as in the case of the Americans, for other ostensible purposes ; but before they separate, are fiercely at logger-heads about this matter. Every ancient party organization has been sundered by it, and their members, in forming new party ties, are almost exclusively controlled by it. The first condition they exact, before joining anybody is, that it should think thus and so of the slavery question.

But what is the slavery question? What is the real issue at the bottom of the excitement

which gathers about this word slavery, as a nucleus? Let us answer, in the outset, that it is not a question as to the merits of slavery in itself, or rather in its adaptation to those communities in which it already exists. With the exception of a certain class of philanthropists, who conceive it their duty to wage war against every form of injustice everywhere, we know of no class in this country who wish to interfere with those communities. At least, there is no distinct or formidable political party professing such an object. A great many individuals at the North, not indifferent to the cause of humanity, claim the right to consider and criticize Southern society, just as they do the various societies of Europe and Asia. But the great body of the people have never evinced any aggressive disposition beyond that, and are willing to leave the practical treatment of slavery in the states to those who know its evils, and are to be presumed best able to devise a remedy. What concerns them solely and exclusively is, the relation of slavery to their own interests and responsibilities. It might be conceded that the peculiar socialism

of the South is the best for it, under the circumstances, that human wisdom can conceive; or, that it has the divine sanction—being equally beneficial to the white and black races without touching the marrow of our public dispute.

The real question turns upon the struggle of two incompatible orders of civilization for the mastery of a common field. It has fallen to the lot of this country to make the attempt to confederate a series of states, separated by two distinct social systems; and, though the attempt is not impracticable in itself, nor was it impracticable under the original conditions, nor is yet impracticable, could these conditions be adhered to—the actual working of the experiment has developed a broad and serious antagonism. The evidences of a latent difference have casually appeared, from the beginning; but they were adjusted as they appeared, on the principle of peaceful compromise. In a late fatal and perfidious hour, however, that principle was flung to the winds, and the elements of discord left to the chance of a hand-to-hand encounter.

The controversy, between what may be termed our Northern and Southern civilizations, presents two aspects: first, whether the influences of the one or the other shall predominate in the federal government; and, secondly, whether the one or the other of these influences shall prevail in the organization of new territories. Virtually, these questions are one; for whichever side succeeds in regard to the first point, will be sure to succeed in regard to the second, and *vice versa*.

As to the first aspect of it, we are all aware what the facts of the case have been hitherto; we are all aware, that for many years the interests of slavery have carried the day, in nearly every department of the national government. The executive has always inclined to that side, and so has the judiciary, and, with occasional exceptions, both branches of the legislature. It came to such a pass, indeed, at last, that no man, whatever his capacities or claims, who was in the least adverse to that interest, was allowed to hold the lowest office of profit or honor under the general government, and much less to achieve any of its

higher places. It is true, at this hour, that the most illustrious poet of his country, that its most illustrious historian, that its most illustrious philosopher, that its most illustrious novelist (were she a man) could not be made a gate-keeper of the public grounds at Washington, if he desired to be ; and all for the simple reason, that having formed a different theory of social life from the one which obtains at the South, he has been honest enough to express it. Even the most eminent statesmen of former days—our Jeffersons, our Franklins, our Jays, and our Adamses—could they arise from their graves, and write what they once wrote, would be excluded forever from political employment. The men of the North, who are born to freedom, who are cradled to rest by the songs of its surges as they roll in from the lakes and oceans, who inhale it with every breath blown from their eternal hills, and who, should they fail to extol it, would be recreant to the earliest and deepest inspirations of their lives, are begirt by an intolerance more exclusive than the ostracism of the Athenian demos, or the interdicts of the

mediaeval papacy. The men of New England and New York, of Ohio and Wisconsin, are yet called upon to adopt the peculiar sentiments of men of Georgia and Texas, or at least to hold their tongues from the temerity of criticism or disapproval, on pain of political banishment. Let them but once whisper abroad any disparagement of slavery, though it were in the friendliest tone, with the sincerest convictions, under an earnest and conscientious sense of its important bearings, and straightway they are marked men.

Now, against this they contend and protest; it is a dictation so arrogant, that to submit to it would be to deserve it; and every impulse of self-respect, honor, and liberty prompts them to avoid that humiliation.

The more immediate and pressing aspect of the great controversy, however, is that which relates to the future destiny of the territories. It presents this simple alternative—whether, contrasting the effects of the free condition of society with those of the slave, we ought to abandon our virgin soils to the occupation of the one, or solemnly consecrate them to the

use of the other? As a nation, we have had a broad and ample experience of the influences of both systems on the prosperity of states, and we are summoned to a decision between them. In this view, the question is one, we repeat, not of races, nor of abstract theories of rights, nor even of religious convictions (although all these will influence the decision), but of actual facts. Demonstrated before us, lie the results of two social experiments, and we are asked, in the light of those demonstrations, to determine which it is best to apply, in the formation of our young and inchoate communities. A brood of such communities is growing up under our fostering wings; our duty is, to launch them in the world, as a good parent would send forth his sons, furnished with the best appliances for a healthful, sober, manly, and generous career; and the choice lies in this—whether that furniture shall come from the pens and plantations of slavery, or from the factories and free-schools of freedom.

There could be no better illustration of the proper solution of this problem, than the experiences of the two states, which lately ap-

peared, through their representatives, in the congressional arena, as the standard-bearers of either party. Massachusetts and South Carolina are both old, and both sea-board states, which took a conspicuous part in our revolutionary war; which were present at the formation of the Constitution; which have since grown, side by side, under their characteristic systems; which cling, with great tenacity, to the principles of these, and which are remarkable for the vigor with which they represent their effects. At the outset, South Carolina was about four times as large Massachusetts, territorially, and is still; but this advantage is partly compensated by the fact, that Massachusetts began with about one-third more total population. Massachusetts, however, was democratically organized into a system of separate, and almost independent townships, each a centre of government in itself, while South Carolina, from the necessity of the case, was centrally organized into parishes, having little or no local authority, and, for the most part, dependent on the principal, or state government. The people of Massachusetts have re-

tained that organization, and with it, the most entire freedom of every inhabitant; while the people of South Carolina have also, with slight modifications, retained their system, and with it, the servitude of nearly the whole laboring class. Now, what have been the effects, on the prosperity of each, of these two contrasted constitutions?

The elements of national greatness, in their three-fold material, intellectual and moral forms, are universally summed up under the heads of population, productive industry, the diffusion of wealth, internal improvement, popular education, and social order. But who, that has ever traveled over the two states we are considering, or taken the pains to compare their statistics, as given in the usual authorities, can have failed to remark their broad and striking differences, in all these respects? Supposing their social systems equally well adapted to their respective localities and the genius of their people, how notable the disparity in the practical results!

On the one part, we behold a considerable progress; but on that of the other, a prodigious

one. On the one side, we behold a large and fertile soil, under a delicious climate, thinly peopled and poorly cultivated; and, on the other, a barren soil, under inclement skies, teeming with towns and cities, and cultivated to the extreme. On the one side, the industry, though productive, is, in many respects, careless, thriftless, improvident, and confined to a few branches which increase slowly; while, on the other, the productiveness of the industry exceeds that of any part of the globe, excepting a few sugar and coffee estates of the torrid zone, and is richly varied, and advancing. On the one side is a slender commerce; and, on the other, a commerce which sweeps the seas. On the one side are bad roads, and few of them; while, on the other, is a *chevaux de frise* of railroads. On the one side is a puny and unprolific intellectual activity; and, on the other, an intellectual activity which leaves no child untaught, and scarcely a man unlettered. On the one side is a society irrevocably divided into castes, where a debased and inferior race grows in numbers and strength, to the increasing embarrassment of the superior race, and

amidst the derision of the civilized world; while, on the other, is a homogeneous society, where every man enjoys the means of the highest culture and the securest happiness, and the future expands and brightens with new prospects of social achievement.* Every year is

* The following table is compiled from the last Census, with the exception of the "Agricultural Products," which is Mr. Tucker's estimate for 1840 :

	MASSACHU'S.	SOUTH CAROLINA.
Population, ...	994,514	668,507
Real and personal estate, . . .	\$573,342,286	\$288,267,694
Acres improved, ...	2,133,436	4,072,651
Acres unimproved, ...	1,222,576	12,145,049
Cash value of farms, ...	\$109,076,347	\$82,431,684
Agricultural products, ...	\$16,100,000	\$21,550,000
Manufacture and mining, ...	\$151,137,145	\$7,063,513
Imports, ...	\$41,367,956	\$1,808,517
Exports, ...	\$16,895,304	\$15,400,408
Tonnage, ...	32,715,327	2,081,312
Rail-road costs, ...	\$55,602,687	\$11,287,093
Value produced to each person,	\$106	\$50
Free-schools, ...	3,679	724
Private schools, ...	403	202
Scholars in all, ...	190,924	26,025
Papers and periodicals, ...	64,820,564	7,145,930 copies
Illiterate white natives, ...	1,861	16,460
Libraries, ...	684,015	107,472 vols.
Churches, ...	1,477	1,182
Church property, ...	\$10,206,184	\$2,172,246

As to the crime and pauperism of the two states, no materials exist for an accurate comparison; but if we may trust the statement of Governor Hammond, in his address to the South Carolina Institute, there are no less than 50,000 whites (one-sixth of the white population), "whose industry is not adequate to their support. They obtain a precarious subsistence by hunting, fishing, plundering fields and folds, and trading with slaves." For further facts in regard to

plunging South Carolina into deeper troubles and dangers, from which her most sagacious and even hopeful minds see no escape but civil war; while every year is lifting Massachusetts toward a more secure and benignant eminence of Christian civilization.

Our argument does not mean to assert that South Carolina ought to adopt the institutions of Massachusetts, because we have no occasion to go into such an inquiry here; but what it does assert is this, that if a high degree of prosperity be desirable to a nation, if a thriving population, if universal industry, if the rapid increase and equitable diffusion of wealth, if general improvement, if education and religion, in short, if a harmonious growth and widening prospects for the future, be the tests of that prosperity, then the institutions of Massachusetts are vastly better in themselves, and in respect to all communities in which they are practicable, than the institutions of South Carolina. We say, that the experience of these

the physical and moral abasement of South Carolina, see Mr. Olmsted's interesting and masterly book, called "The Seaboard Slave States." New York, 1856.

states has shown, incontestably, the superiority of the free condition of society, and that we, as honest patriots and Christian men, are bound, by all human wisdom, and all divine law, to prefer those institutions, where either may be adopted, as in our new territories. We are bound to secure to our friends and descendants in those regions, to which, under our guardianship, they have removed, every highest guaranty and facility of future well-being.

But the superiority of free society, so signally exhibited in the contrasts of the two great and powerful states we have named, is confirmed by the experience of all the states. The relative position of the free states, compared with the slave states, is accurately denoted by the relations of Massachusetts and South Carolina. Free society is always on the lead; and one of the established principles of political economy is, that it must be so—that it cannot be otherwise; that God would be forgetful of the laws he has implanted in the human constitution, and in the universe, if he did not render freedom the most benignant of all conditions. Mr. Henry C. Carey, in a most

valuable book of his,* has shown, by a rigid induction from the statistics of four nations—India, France, England, and the United States—that in everything which involves the success, the happiness, and the moral elevation of their people, their eminence is in a precise ratio to their political freedom. He proves, specifically, and beyond a doubt, that, in respect to the security of person and property; in respect to quantity and quality of work; in respect to the profits of capital, and the wages of labor; in respect to the equable distribution of wealth, and exemption from taxes; in respect to the soundness and extension of credit; in respect to facility of intercourse, and habits of industry; in respect to purity of marriage and growth of population; in respect to the absence of crime, and even of disease; and, finally, in respect to literary and religious instruction, the condition of nations is measured by their freedom. It is such an overwhelming demonstration, as no defender of despotism, in any of its shapes, has ever undertaken to refute, or even cared to notice. Yet a similar

* Principles of Political Economy, 3 vols.

demonstration is possible, in regard to the free and slave states of this Union. It can be shown that a clear line of distinction separates the two, in all these elements of high civilization. And how could it be otherwise? The condition of slavery, confining its laborious classes, for the most part, to simple agricultural labor, does not stimulate, and scarcely admits of that variety and magnificence of product, which is the mark of high physical development, whilst it is still more deficient in the means of intellectual and moral progress. Its superior class often attains the most elevated point, both of character and culture, but its masses, with here and there an individual exception, cannot rise above the lowest level.

All this, however, needs no protracted discussion. Do not the nine hundred and ninety-nine men, out of every thousand, at the North, honestly believe, that a free society is, in every sense, preferable to a slave society? Are there not thousands upon thousands at the south, who believe the same thing, who openly confess the superiority of the former, and justify

the continuation of the latter solely upon the ground, that it was an unavoidable inheritance, of which it is now difficult, if not impossible, to get relieved?

The only exceptions that we know to this almost universal conviction, are the opinions held by a few southern speculators, who, following the lead of Mr. Calhoun, have discovered the most alarming weaknesses in free society. They see in it a thousand elements of evil—in its relations of labor and capital, a future war between the rich and poor—in its excitability, the seeds of a desolating fanaticism, and in its party violences, a most speedy anarchy. Poor fellows! They seem to be afflicted with a judicial blindness!

No observant man is, of course, insensible to the many lingering defects and evils of our free society. If he have studied it minutely, he will not regard it as by any means perfect or final: yet, on the comparison of it with other societies, and after every abatement, he will come to a quite positive conclusion, that it contains facilities for reaching every imaginable social excellence, greater than any other

that now exists. Taken as to the general result, he will see, that the civilization of our free states is not only considerably in advance of that of any other part of the globe, but is of such a structure and spirit that it will continue, for many years yet, to keep in advance. What civilization can be named its superior? That of Turkey, Russia, Italy, Austria, Spain—the simple suggestion is ludicrous! Outside of England, France, and the north of Germany, which surpass us in certain special aspects, there are no nations to be named on the same day with New England, the northern middle states, and the settled parts of the West. We do not mean that these have actually achieved all the finer results of European life; but that, apart from their own peculiar attainments, they are in a condition to appropriate the highest existing social culture. Without sacrificing their characteristic virtues, they are rapidly adopting the best refinements of others. Nowhere else do literature and art spread so widely among the people; and nowhere else is domestic life so readily blending the genialities and graces of intercourse (before impossible to

its newness and rawness) with that purity which it always had and still retains.

The forms of our free society, being alike flexible and fixed, preserve the security of law, while they give ample scope to the movements of progress. That dissolution, especially, which the aforesaid speculators fondly predict for it, in consequence of its fanaticisms and turbulences, is an event the most remote ; for its very freedom is its defense, and the errors which arise in it, like the vapors of the night, are dissipated in the morning by the light of free discussion. When the mind is exempted from compressive restraints, its natural activity is displayed in novel schemes of thought as well as in mechanical contrivance ; projects of reform of all kinds are as inseparable from it as business enterprise ; and like a rich soil which produces the best fruits, it also abounds in plentiful crops of weeds. All the excitements of it, however, all its *isms* and vagaries, are scarcely felt as evils. Beyond the temporary ferment they occasion, no one is the worse for them, while these ferments may be themselves regarded as the outlets of irritation that might

otherwise be deep and dangerous. It is the forced suppression of social energies, and not the ventilation of them, which leads to pernicious revolts. For this reason, therefore, we have no fear of the imputed lawlessness of free society—a danger to which, in its peculiar constitution, slave-society seems to us far more exposed. Dr. Arnold somewhere remarks with profound wisdom, that “the age of chivalry, whose departure Burke so much regretted, was the natural parent of that age of Jacobinism which he so much abhorred.” He meant that both breathe a spirit of hostility to order, encouraging men to look upon themselves as independent of their fellows, and cultivating a proud and selfish idolatry of what belongs to themselves individually, whether it be personal honor or personal glory, as in the one form of the disease, or personal liberty and equity, as in the other. Both lead to what Bacon calls *bonum suitatis* to the neglect of the good of the general body. True as this is of a genuine chivalry, it is still more true of that spurious sort which springs out of slavery, and which breeds a haughty, insolent, and irritable self-

conceit—intractable to law, and disdaining social subordination. It is in southern society that personal and mobocratic violence is rifest—it is there that schemes of filibusterism are principally engendered—and there that the threat of taking up arms against the Union is a favorite method of discussion.

In the elements of stability as well as of prosperity, then, the social organization of the North enjoys an unquestionable superiority over that of the South; and we do not see how any rational or humane man can hesitate as to which is the most desirable for a new region. If the question concerned a community already settled, in which the habits had been formed, and large amounts of property were invested in a definite condition of things, the determination of it might be more embarrassing; but our western territories are a primitive, untrodden ground—no vested interests exist there to be disturbed—no ancient prejudices to be aroused—and no hoary abuses to be overthrown. All is fresh, and new, and unperverted; nothing stands between the judgment of what is best for them, the actual truths of

experience and reason, and the instant application of them. Now, in such circumstances, to doom them, for years to come, to an inferior social system, full of confessed weaknesses, full of hopeless evils, full of disastrous liabilities and perils, would be treating them with a cruelty which a brute would be ashamed of towards its young.

But, unfortunately, the politicians, ever disinclined to contemplate political movements in their larger and humaner aspects, always contrive to complicate them with divergent or collateral issues. They will not look at them in the light of a sound political and social philosophy, as matters which may control the happiness and stamp the character of unborn millions, and to the decision of which a man should bring, not his selfish cunning, but his maturest wisdom, and his most generous sympathies; but they look at them, almost exclusively, as they bear on the distributions of power and their own prospects of advancement. It has fallen to this question of the organization of our territories to be decided quite on these grounds. Among the politicians of the South, it has be-

come a desperate struggle for the retention of their ascendancy, and among those of the North, a desperate gamble for success ; and between the two, the people of the United States have been cheated out of their rightful control of their dependencies ; and the people of the territories themselves subjected to a series of the most atrocious outrages.

In the whole history of our legislation, there is not another so barefaced, flagitious, and reckless a course of proceeding as that which initiated, accompanied, and has followed the repeal of the Missouri compromise. We doubt, indeed, whether any legislation of any civilized country, this side of the French revolution, has been marked by such an utter want of principle, and at the same time been so pregnant with dangerous consequences. Wresting from the representatives of the people, under false pretenses, and on the ground of a mere abstraction, their long-settled right of legislating for the territories, to confer it upon chance-comers, the authors and abettors of squatter sovereignty no sooner saw it in exercise than they hastened to suppress it by fire and sword.

Flinging out the prize of a splendid empire, to be won by a scramble between the two parts of the Union, already inflamed and hostile, they have brought us to the verge of a fratricidal war. Inviting the settlement and organization of the territories by the people of all the states, they have let loose the wild hordes of the border upon a particular class of them, and denounced the penalties of treason against their action as freemen. Beginning in fraud, they have ended in force.

It is in the power of the Congress, however, to pass the crisis, by a ready recognition of the claims of Kansas, as a free state. Her action, like that of Arkansas, Michigan, and California, which furnish appropriate precedents, has been somewhat irregular, but in no respect treasonable. Her people, provoked by every incitement to extremities, have deported themselves with temper and discretion. They are not compelled even to ask, that "something should be pardoned to the spirit of liberty;" but are amply justified in resting their case on its naked merits. Let it be treated with a manly and truthful independence, and let those, whose

duty it is to dispose of it, or to act in the matter in any way, remember the profound saying of Emerson: "Never, my friend, never strike sail to a fear. Come into port grandly, or sail with God the seas."

KANSAS MUST BE FREE.

No man, who is not an enemy of this country, can look upon its present political struggle with other feelings than those of shame, indignation, and alarm; of shame, because we present to the civilized world the spectacle of a great, free republic, almost rent asunder by a contest on the subject of human slavery; of indignation, because our men in power have committed, and are committing, a series of the very grossest outrages against the dictates of prudence, as well as of justice and freedom; and of alarm, because there seems to be no probable issue to the conflict but in civil war.

For nearly seventy years now, the delicate experiment of self-government, instituted on this western continent, has more than justified the hopes of its authors. It has been, in every sense, a most successful experiment. Every object which it is possible or desirable for a

good government to attain, has been attained by our federation of republics. Peace, security, content, wealth, happiness, have followed its operations, with an amplitude and fullness of fruition that were never before witnessed. Neither Sparta, nor Athens, nor Rome, nor the British Empire, nor Russia, nor any other nation, noted in the annals of mankind for early maturity, has exhibited such an astonishing growth, in all the elements of national greatness, as has been exhibited by the United States of North America. Other states have taken centuries to consolidate their power, and even to secure their existence, while we have sprung at once, as if by miracle, into the most flourishing vigor. Our territory, within the short period of our independence, has quadrupled in extent; our population has expanded tenfold; our commerce equals that of the mistress of the seas; and our attainments in intelligence and virtue compare favorably with those of the most civilized of the European nations.

During this time of unexampled advance and felicity, but one question has arisen among us, likely, from the nature of it, to interrupt the

harmonious continuance of this happy condition. There have been many severe and earnest conflicts in the proceedings of our political parties—much excitement, much acrimonious feeling, and some dangerous revolts—but the question of slavery alone has become a touchstone of our vitality. Great and intense as may have been the commotions caused by other matters of difference, they have been easily settled, either by a clear preponderance of opinion on one side or the other, or by seasonable compromise. No one of them has ever been deemed of sufficient importance, to hazard the peace of the Union upon any particular determination of it. When it had been thoroughly discussed, when parties had divided upon it, when the usual bitterness of party warfare had exhausted itself in intrigue and denunciation—the vote was taken and the people acquiesced in the result. Once clearly decided, there was an end to the debate. Hostilities were suspended, and the country went on its way in peace, until some new conjuncture of affairs presented the opportunity for new combinations and new conflicts. Thus, the question

between federalism and state rights distracted us for a time, but gradually passed away. Thus, the internal improvement question, and the tariff question, and the national bank question, and the Texas question, have led to heated controversies, and subsided. And thus, it was supposed that by the compromises of 1820, and 1850, the deeper question of slavery, after embroiling us for years, had been peacefully adjusted.

But, in this respect, a terrible mistake was committed. All the events of the day show that the slavery question has not been adjusted. The contest in regard to it rages with more vehemence than ever. Every part of the nation is excited, aroused, maddened by it ; is, indeed, almost up in arms. Persons, who have hitherto, on account of their professions, or from indifference, kept aloof from politics, are deeply engaged in it ; our pulpits resound with it ; our literature is filled with it ; the extremes of feeling have passed over into violence and bloodshed ; and the boldest, as well as the most timid minds, begin to ask, What is to be the end ?

It is of some moment, then, to inquire into the causes of this ferment and anxiety. Why is the agitation of this question more pervading and active than that of any other? Why are the debates of Congress fuller of exasperation than ever before? Why are the newspapers so vituperative and truculent? Why are the villages of Kansas ablaze at midnight from the torch of the incendiary, and why is a senator smitten down from his very seat in our highest hall of legislation?

Our first reply is, that slavery is a system of such peculiar nature, that it scarcely allows of rational discussion. When it is discussed at all, either in the way of attack or defense, it inevitably leads to a distempered expression of feelings. Among those by whom it is opposed, it is regarded as a practice at once too mean and criminal to admit of extenuation. Touching their profoundest religious sensibilities by what is esteemed its flagrant violation of the very idea of manhood, and appealing to the tenderest sentiments of natural compassion by the sufferings ascribed to its victims, their convictions against it easily inflame into passion-

ate hostility. They cannot conceive how free men—and, above all, Christian men, who ought to see a brother in every human being—can consent to doom the least of their fellows to a remediless bondage, a bondage which shuts him out forever, not only from the means, but from the hope, of all progressive civilization. They are incensed by the thought. The ordinary injustices of society they can excuse, because they are always partial in their extent, and never final in their effects; but this master-wrong, embracing an entire race in its evils, and looking forward to no probable amelioration, swells into an enormity of offense which it is impossible for their charity to pardon. As aggravations of this general sense of the turpitude of the thing, occasional instances of abuse arise; some refractory subject is tortured at the stake, or some panting fugitive is torn by blood-hounds, and then the primitive feeling is kindled into a fiery indignation. The vials of an unmeasured wrath are opened upon the slaveholder; no terms of reproach seem too severe for him; his conduct is arraigned as of a piece with that of the Thug, the vampire, or

the pirate ; and he is morally gibbeted before the world as the proper object of hatred and scorn. As long, then, as slavery continues to exist, and human sympathies remain what they are, it will continue to be opposed. It will be, also, violently opposed. Men of philosophic temper, who have learned from history how much every social institution is to be judged relatively, or according to circumstances, may be disposed to qualify their opinions ; they may lament the savage and intolerant spirit in which those who are mingled up with it are assailed, but the many make no such distinctions or allowances. They judge of all things on broad and absolute principles. They perceive in slavery a manifest wrong done to our common humanity, and they denounce that wrong explicitly, without niceness of phrase and without meal in the mouth. Ever since the two great influences of Christianity and Democracy have been practically received in society—the one proclaiming the right of all men to spiritual, and the other the right of all men to temporal, liberty—there has been a growing revolt against it—a revolt which, in stern or

excitable natures, deepens into the intensest animosity.

On the other side, these assaults are met in a spirit of resentful and arrogant defiance. The excited slaveholder, conceiving his rights to be attacked—fearing, too, the dangerous consequences of any tampering with them—repulses even more fiercely than he is attacked. Could the vast pecuniary interests—the incalculable social liabilities which, in his belief, depend upon the continuance of his authority—suffer him to be moderate, the habits of dominion in which he is trained would not. It is one of the necessities of his position that he should be quick to resent. Accustomed to an unquestioning obedience, he is easily aroused by any show of opposition. But let that opposition spread widely, and take a somewhat angry and vindictive shape, he is obliged to rage against it rather than to reason. “A despot,” says Aristotle, “whenever he ascends the throne, takes a wild beast with him ;” and the slaveholder is a despot in a small way. He possesses an unlimited power of control over a number of his fellow-beings ; and it is

the universal testimony of history, that where such a power is exercised, while in rare cases it develops a kindly condescension and an affectionate and gentle discipline, it betrays most men into an impatient self-will and petulance. "The whole commerce between master and slave," says Jefferson, "is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions." As slavery originates in violence, as the poor African is torn from his home by violence, is transported across the seas by violence, and is sent to this land or that by violence, so he can be retained in his subjection only by violence. The master is compelled to assert his authority by force, in one shape or another, and the habit of asserting it passes more or less into his whole conduct. Because he may not make concessions to his slave with safety to his system, he cannot make concessions to those who would plead the cause of the slave. Every interference, even of the law or of opinion, becomes an impertinence. He must reign supreme over these, as he does over the plantation, or quit the grounds of his power. Asserting a right of property in his servant, he

claims that almost absolute disposal of it which pertains to the idea of property. Yet he cannot trust it to the ordinary safeguards of property; for it is a peculiar species, inflammable, locomotive, furtive, and, sometimes, given to strike. It must be protected, therefore, by provisions that would elsewhere seem fanatical in their severity. When other property is assailed, society contents itself with the lenient punishment of the offender; but when this peculiar species is assailed, even by word, the offense swells into the gigantic proportions of a capital crime, and the offender is placed on a level with the incendiary and the murderer. Other kinds of property may be debated by the publicist or the editor, its abuses exposed, and the legitimacy of it even called in question, but this kind asserts for itself an inviolable sanctity. It must not be touched at the peril of life. Even public opinion, wherever it prevails, is benumbed by it into silent acquiescence; and a surveillance, as subtle and swift as that of any of the Roman Cæsars, watches over its safety, and smites the remotest malcontent with paralysis.

Now, a controversy between the anti-slavery feeling, such as we have described it, and a body of men placed and educated as slaveholders are, will not be confined to a pleasant exchange of words. On the one side are radical, religious, and social convictions, inflamed to a pitch of fanaticism; and, on the other, various impulses of interest, prejudice, fear, and habitual domination concentrated into an aggressive resentment. How can the encounter of the two fail to be a fierce and internecine war, animated by the most vehement passions, and looking forward to no close but the moral conquest of one or the other? Were the question simply abstract, like a theological tenet, or a scientific hypothesis, this diversity of sentiment would lead to conflict; but it happens in this country that the antagonism is related to the deepest practical considerations. The slavery question is one of political power as well as of interest—it is one of conflicting civilizations as well as of conflicting opinion—one in which not only the present character, but the future destiny of the whole country is involved.

The peculiarity of our political structure,

therefore, may be assigned as a second cause of the vivacity and vital import of the prevailing contest. Our constitution has coupled together into a kind of wedlock two different orders of society—the one ancient and patriarchal, the other hoyden and capricious—composed essentially of the same races—yet differing widely in institutions, tendencies, and aims. While they were actuated by the original impulse of their union—which was the achievement of a national independence, and the establishment of national power—they maintained a delightful harmony. They caressed and fondled each other with all the ardor of young lovers. They relieved each other's burdens, encouraged each other's virtues, and looked forward complacently to years of increasing happiness, and a long line of descendants. But these early fervors could not disguise the secret existence of serious distemperatures. In the progress of the domestic management, there occurred little bickerings and tiffs, which disclosed a somewhat deep-seated incompatibility. It began to be felt, more and more, that, between a social life founded upon free-

dom, and one founded upon slavery, there must arise, unless prevented by an almost miraculous self-restraint on the part of both, incessant causes of discord. It began to be seen, that the control of the federal power, and by means of that of the character of the territories, would constitute a splendid prize for the contentious adjutancy of the two parts. Those vast and lucrative trusts, inseparable from the central head, and the power to be wielded in a thousand forms, through its many functions, were temptations of too extraordinary a nature to be resisted by the average political virtue of the best people. Accordingly, they have become the rock on which, if any, we shall split. It is universally acknowledged, that they must be administered in the interests and for the ends of slavery, or in the interests and for the ends of freedom. Slavery and freedom cannot both be national. The spirit, the impulse, the aspirations of one or the other must prevail. If slavery is not a local thing, peculiar to some of the states, then freedom is local and peculiar, and must withdraw more and more from the dispensation of office

and the control of legislation. No nation can serve two masters. If the policy of slavery gets the ascendant, the public demeanor must be different from what it would be if the policy of freedom preponderated. Without imputing to either side any wanton inclination to molest the rights of the other, it is clear, from the inherent necessities of the two systems of society, that they must operate in quite different directions. Slavery, at the best, is the government of a dominant and privileged class, and cannot fully sympathize with the broader life of a whole people. Free society, on the contrary, is buoyant with every pulse of popular feeling. It is built upon the original idea of our Revolution—the idea of free and equal rights. It is pervaded by the democratic sentiment, which, towards the close of the eighteenth century, spread over the civilized world, and created a new epoch in the history of mankind. But the other system, for the most part, has wandered from these primitive aspirations. Under the leadership of Mr. Calhoun and his school, it has substituted a dogma about the natural superiority of certain races for the old

doctrine of democratic equality. It concerns itself less with humanity, and more with physiology. It has learned to defend the subjugation of labor as a just and normal condition; and its proclivities tend to the perpetuation, not the amelioration, of the anomalies of its social existence.

Thus, we find our confederacy divided into two parts—fifteen members of it, with a white population of about six millions, on the one hand—and sixteen members, with a white population of thirteen millions, on the other—face to face with each other, in a severe struggle for the mastery. With the one is the weight of numbers, wealth, enterprise, intelligence, and exemption from domestic dangers, but the other enjoys a superiority in the possession of the organized forces of government, in directness of purpose, and in compactness and energy of action. The prestige of past successes is with the South—the supine and cautious conservatism of the nation is with it; the restless, excitable avidity of foreign conquests, by a strange juxtaposition, is also with it; but the conscience of the nation is against it; the

literature is against it ; the probabilities of the future, founded upon the natural increase of numbers and the growth of opinion, are against it ; and, on this last account, it feels through all its joints that it must conquer now or never. Indeed, it is obvious to both parties, that the great conflict is drawing to a head, and that the coming presidential election will precipitate a decision. That event, at all times bristling with excitements, is invested with a new and tremendous import, by its bearing upon deeper ulterior issues. It is marshaling the two orders of civilization to a final encounter ; already the sullen clouds of the storm are flashing their menaces, and discharging their bolts along the remote western horizon—comparatively harmless as yet, but filling the air with a vague and restless foreboding of evil.

But this allusion leads us to remark, that while the slavery dispute is so irritable and petulant in itself, and is bound up with such profound collateral issues, there is a third and special cause for the existing aggravations in the flagitious course which the politicians have pursued towards Kansas. That rich and beau-

tiful territory, larger than the kingdom of Great Britain, and equal in area to the Austrian and French empires, the geographical centre of the western continent, is also the pivot of its most vital and determinative controversy. It is no extravagance to say, that what the plains of Iran were to western Asia—what France is to Europe—this region of Kansas will be to the great Valley of the West. It holds the key to the entire and gigantic civilization which shall soon fill up those solitudes. There lie the granaries of the New World; and thence shall spring the seats of future empire. For years to come, it will be the goal of that stupendous migration flowing from the exhausted East, and for years again, from its capacious womb shall proceed the busy millions destined to redeem or to disgrace the extensive fields beyond. Like a great inland lake—which receives the many streams of the mountains, and pours them forth again in mighty rivers—Kansas will color both what it takes and what it gives, and become the source of a beneficent fertility, or a remediless blight.

For nearly half a century this pregnant centre was consecrated in perpetuity, by a solemn act of legislation, to freedom—an act which, as Mr. Douglas said in his Springfield speech of 1849, “received the sanction of all parties in every section of the Union.” “It had its origin,” he continues, “in the hearts of all patriotic men who desired to preserve and perpetuate the blessings of our glorious Union—an origin akin to that of the constitution of the United States, conceived in the same spirit of fraternal affection, and calculated to remove forever the only danger which seemed to threaten, at some distant day, to sever the social bond of union. All the evidences of public opinion at that day seemed to indicate that this compromise had become canonized in the hearts of the American people as a sacred thing, which no ruthless hand would be ever reckless enough to disturb.” But, in 1854, that “ruthless hand” was raised. Although it was not demanded by any exigency of state, uncalled for by a single voice among the people, it was recklessly raised by Mr. Douglas himself, in the lowest spirit of demagogery.

The bulwarks, which had beaten back the billows of a lifetime, were thrown down on the pretense of the abstract right of each locality to the sovereign disposal of its own affairs—a pretense which, if it had been well founded, was then purely gratuitous. The effect was, to fling away this magnificent domain to a rabble of competitors. As the Roman empire, in the days of its degeneracy, was sold to the highest bidder, so this empire of the future experienced the more degrading fate of abandonment to the mob. All the riff-raff of the borders—men of rude and violent natures, regardless of principles, and avid of plunder—were invited, along with soberer citizens, to a pell-mell scramble for the prize. The world saw, with astonishment, a great republic surrendering its right to the control of its dependencies, surrendering its noble prerogative of fixing the character of inchoate and unsettled communities, to the precarious arbitrament of a miscellaneous herd of first comers. It saw the few honest and legitimate settlers, who, taking their fortune in their hands, had gone thither with an exalted purpose of founding a state

worthy of the most advanced modern civilization, overwhelmed, in their very first attempts at organization, not by the red savages of the wilds, but by the white savages of the border.

If there is anything made clear by the united testimony of private letters and public investigation, by the almost unanimous concurrence of the emigrants, by the confessions of their adversaries, and by the faithful scrutiny of the Committee of Congress, it is, that the first election for the legislative constitution of the territory was not an election but an invasion. An election is the free choice of their rulers by a people who have a right, under the laws, to such a choice. But this election was turned into a military occupation. A foreign army, somewhat irregular as to its discipline, but with all the equipage and appliances of a besieging host, marched into the polling places, as the French army, in 1848, filed through the streets of Rome, or as the English are in the habit of taking possession of some Indian zillah. It came in detachments, with drums beating and colors flying—with arms and ammunition, and baggage-wagons—and pitched its tents and

posted sentries, and, driving the inhabitants from the ballot-boxes, voted. If the judges of the election were docile, it made the most admirable effort to preserve the peace; but, if they were refractory, others were put up in their stead. Having accomplished its purpose, not without a number of incidental outrages, this valiant band returned to its Missouri home.

In every assembly district, it appears from the evidence before the Congressional commission, these frauds were perpetrated. Of course, the legislature, which resulted from them, was a seditious and usurping body. It had no more authority to act than the marauding troop by which it was appointed. In no sense was it a representation of the people. The pretext that the certificate of "due election" given by Governor Reeder to two-thirds of the members, in the absence of objections to the returns, conferred upon them a legal character, might have been true, if he had been a judicial instead of a mere ministerial agent. But his act was only declaratory of a subsisting fact, and not decisive of an actual right. It was formal, not final. It were monstrous to

suppose that the liberties of a whole nation could be suspended upon a mere clerical function. Imagine that Governor Reeder had set aside all the returns, and given his certificates to friends of his own, would that have constituted them a valid legislature? Could not the people, in that case, either in their primary capacity, or through an appeal to Congress, vacate his act? Assuredly they could; for there is no maxim or principle of law more firmly established, than that fraud in any proceeding vitiates it from the beginning. Besides, if we admit that Governor Reeder was the proper and exclusive judge of the legality of the legislature, it follows that his primary recognition of it was nullified by his subsequent refusal to recognize it, after it had removed, contrary to the organic act, the place of its assemblage. The same law which empowered him to certify the election-returns, empowered him to fix the place of legislation, and if his action was binding upon the people in one case, it was no less binding in the other.

That this pretended legislature knew itself to be illegally constituted, is evidenced by the

whole course of its proceedings. They were the proceedings of conspirators, and not of a deliberative assembly. More tyrannical, atrocious, and malignant acts, were scarcely ever decreed by an eastern satrap against a subject province, than were passed by these men, in the name of law, against their own assumed constituents. From the earliest ages, among every people making the slightest pretensions to freedom, the right of free speech, the purity of suffrage, the independence of the press, the exemption of the citizen from arbitrary arrests, from vindictive penalties, and from unusual oaths, have been cardinal and sacred objects. In those darker days of monarchical despotism, when our forefathers of England laid the foundation of that glorious polity which sheds a lustre upon the Anglo-Saxon name, these were the guiding stars of all their struggles. At this day, on the continent of Europe, the heaviest grievance of the oppressed multitudes, for the removal of which they have often undertaken desperate and sanguinary revolutions, is their deprivation of the rights of free opinion and utterance in regard to the

action of government, and the institutions of society. Yet, these legislators of Kansas—in view of these holy and imprescriptible rights—rights which are the very essence of a free commonwealth—with the hot haste of pirates, eager for the life of their victims—struck them out of existence. Those precious defenses of the citizen—speech, the press, the bar, the jury—were alike invaded with inquisitorial zeal. It was enacted, 1st, that any person who should print, write, or speak anything “against the right to hold slaves in the territory,” should be deemed guilty of a felony: 2nd, that no person should exercise the elective franchise, or be allowed to practice in the courts, without first swearing to support the fugitive slave law: 3rd, that any person speaking or writing anything calculated “to promote a disorderly, dangerous, or rebellious disaffection among slaves,” should be punishable with imprisonment at hard labor for five years; 4th, that any person aiding a slave to escape, or assisting at an insurrection, should suffer death; and 5th, that no person opposed to slavery could sit on a jury in which offenses against these

acts were brought in question ! and, finally, as if these provisions themselves were not enough, the future elections of the territory were so arranged, that persons opposed to slavery were disfranchised, and everybody else, whether an actual citizen or not, on the payment of a nominal tax, was suffered to vote. The entire scheme, it will be seen, had nothing in it of legislation for a community of mingled opinions, but was throughout a proscription and persecution of a particular class. Everything was to be prostituted to slavery, as in the darker ages of the world everything was prostituted to a form of religion. Slavery was the state, the church, the all—the one thing to be sustained at all hazards. No man can read the clauses of these enactments, as they stand on the statute-book, without deriving the profoundest conviction that the authors of them were playing a desperate game, in which no consideration of principle or honor entered, but the whole was fraud.

Cheated of all legitimate government, there remained two courses for the actual settlers to pursue—to appeal to the federal authority to

maintain the law, grossly violated, and to undertake to institute a government for themselves, and both these courses were pursued. Unfortunately, and by a single forgetfulness of duty, to use no harsher term, the federal authority had already committed itself to the cause of the ruffians. Whether it was imbecility, or roguery, or sheer tyranny, or all these combined, which constrained him, does not appear; but the President, who in Massachusetts had used the army of the United States to capture a runaway negro, could find no occasion for his interference in the armed resistance of a mob to an ordinance of Congress. On the other hand, he did whatever he could, indirectly, to encourage the sedition. He patronized its agents—he instructed his own agents to assist and abet them—and at last, when a direct blow in behalf of slavery would be most effective, he found the right, so long held in abeyance, to order an army into the territory.

Meanwhile, the settlers had adopted the second alternative, of framing a government for themselves. In technical strictness, the authority for this proceeding ought to have

come through Congress ; but as the popular doctrine, as the doctrine on which the territory itself was organized, was that of "squatter sovereignty," and as precedents existed in the cases of Michigan, Arkansas, and California—in which states had been formed without the aid of Congress—they concluded, with Madison, that in such emergencies "forms ought to give way to substance."* With all due publicity, and in the most perfect order, a new government was formed, its officers appointed, and application for admission into the Union made.

But, in the way of the execution of this design, harmless as it appears, there stood two formidable lions. In the first place, the wretches, who had, at the outset, plundered them of their rights, gathering strength and number from the encouragement of the pro-slavery party everywhere, were again ready to pounce upon them ; and, in the second place, the United States' authorities—judges, juries, marshals, colonels, sergeants, and dragoons—un-

* Federalist, No. 40.

der new definitions of treason, and the most audacious stretches of law, and to the utter disregard of justice, were sent to assist at the cremation. Between the two, the friends of the Free State cause were crushed to the earth, their leaders were arrested, their property pilaged, their houses burnt, and their families dispersed. The details of the infamous rout still fill the journals. A systematic suppression of freedom, begun by the outlaws of the frontier, has been conducted to a bloody end by the administration. It would seem as if freedom in Kansas had become an irritation and a nuisance to men in power, just as the simple worship of the Albigeois was to the fierce zeal of the Dominicans, or as the trade, the wealth, and the independence of the Netherlands became to Philip the Second. Its presence there disturbs and rebukes them, as the presence of Mordecai at the gate of the king did Haman.

Doubtless, there has been considerable exaggeration in the reports of the trials and sufferings to which the settlers have been exposed; doubtless, there have been excesses, both of word or deed, committed by themselves; for,

in times of high excitement, a uniform temperance is not to be expected; but the single fact which glares upon us through all the turmoil, and all the conflicting rumors, is, that a peaceful and honest movement in behalf of freedom has been extinguished by force. Disguise it as we may, palliate or justify it as we may, this is still the fact; and it falls upon the heart with a frightful, almost stunning effect. In the middle of the nineteenth century, in a land preëminent for its pretensions to liberty, an effort to save the future key of the continent, from the universally acknowledged evils of human bondage, has been precipitately, wantonly, disastrously, arrested, if not forever baffled. It is a fact which compels us to inquire, whether our pride in the supposed superiority of our age and nation, in the spirit of justice, and in the love of rational liberty; may not prove, after all, but a pleasing self-deception.

These are the public or general causes of that crethism of politics which marks a feverish access; but, to increase its energy, there came upon the top of the deplorable events in

Kansas, an event of a personal nature, which possessed also a national significance. We refer to the disgraceful attack upon Mr. Sumner, in the Senate of the United States. That any man, were he the most despicable member of that body, should be stricken to the floor by the hands of a member of the other House, for the just exercise of his constitutional rights, and for the faithful expression of the sentiments of his constituents, is an offense which ought to excite a universal reprobation. But when that man is one of its most accomplished members—a gentleman by habit and education, a scholar, a profound jurist, an eloquent speaker, an upright citizen, as remarkable for the amiableness as he is for the dignity of his deportment, and whose fame has penetrated both hemispheres—the offense grows into an enormity beyond the reach of language to describe. We share in the feeling of earnest indignation with which it has been almost everywhere rebuked at the North, but this feeling is not unmingled with a deeper one of humiliation and alarm. We are humiliated by the thought that the manliness, the honor, the

good sense of the republic should have so far degenerated in any quarter, as to admit, and what is worse, to approve a brutality so gross. And we are alarmed lest, in the reaction of the public mind against the outrage, it should be led to nurse its exasperated feelings into a settled purpose of revenge. The best of men often retain so much of the animal in their composition that they are moved beyond themselves at the sight of blood—

“——si torrida parvus
Venit in ora cruor, rediunt rabiesque, furorque”—

and how much more apt are the multitude to be carried to an excess of rage? There was malice and uncharitableness enough in public sentiment before, without adding this fuel to the flame. There was violence enough in the tone of public discussion, without extending it to actual blows. That game once begun, where is it to end? The people of the free states, fortunately, are, by their religious education, and by their habits of industry, inclined to peace; they are docile, patient, and forbearing—qualities which men of violence are apt

to despise—but, once aroused, and, our word for it, that the energy, which has enabled them to conquer themselves, to conquer the inclemencies of nature, to conquer by their enterprise every rebellious sea and every defying mountain, will be carried into the pursuits of strife. It is a most dangerous and formidable demon which the slave states invoke, when they conjure up the spirit of physical force. Like the Afrite of the eastern tale, it may seem to them only a bottle of smoke in the beginning, but that smoke, once let loose upon the air, will raise its head into clouds, and its hands will become like winnowing forks, and its nostrils trumpets, and its eyes a consuming fire. The one great lesson taught of human history, written in crimson letters on a thousand pages, is, that “he who takes the sword shall perish by the sword.” Unless the journalists and the public men, who have applauded this murderous deed, are prepared for the worst extremities, they will recall their insane and passionate approval. We cannot conceive a folly more suicidal for them than that which would appeal to the arbitrament

by combat. If they dread free discussion, if they distrust the decisions of the ballot-box, they have still less to hope from a resort to arms.

It will be seen, that it is not a consolatory view we have been compelled to take of our public affairs, and yet they are not altogether hopeless. If the ruffianism of Washington and the borders should have the effect of awakening opinion to the real issues before the country, it will compensate for much of its evil. Under the existing organization of the government, and with the prevalent usages of parties, which have thrown them almost entirely into the hands of corrupt managers, nothing is to be expected from those sources. A regenerate and united public sentiment is alone equal to the task of retrieving our unhappy decline. The time has come when every honest man, whatever his party politics, who deems the Republic worthy of his care, should determine to arrest the downward tendency of things. He is solemnly called upon, by every exigency of the times, to decide whether the materialism, the barbarism, the worst and lowest impulses of

the social state, or the higher and better influences of our democratic civilization, are to prevail. Shall the generous and manly confidence of our fathers in the doctrine of human rights continue to be ours, or shall we surrender it to the narrow and base lusts of an oligarchy? Shall the magnificent empires growing up on the western shores of the Mississippi become the homes of an industrious, peaceful, beneficent freedom, or shall they be given over to the chain-gang and sterility? These are the questions of the day, and the trial questions of our destiny. If the wicked scheme for the perpetuation and extension of slavery—of which the Kansas-Nebraska bill was the first clause—is to be carried into complete effect—if the noble yearning for freedom, which is the inspiration and life of the North, is to be suppressed at Washington, and excluded from the territories by force—let Ichabod be written upon the doors of our temples, for the glory will be departed. It is impossible that slavery and a vital, genuine republicanism should thrive and spread together; it is impossible that bond labor and free labor should work cheek-by-jowl

on the same soil ; it is impossible that a special class should rule the people, and the people still retain their supremacy and power. In a nation otherwise free, slavery may prolong a subordinate existence for years, but when it leaps into the ascendant, the spring of the national life is broken. A disease may linger long on the extremities of a system, which would be fatal to it the moment it touches the great central organs. Confined to its original localities, the slave-system of the United States was pernicious only, or chiefly, within the limits of those localities ; but when the spirit and the power of it invaded the general government, and sought a diffusion over the territories, it became a universal evil—an evil which, unless arrested, and again confined to its primitive range, will dry up the sources of the most noble and glorious progress.

As we read the chronicles of the nations, from the dim traditions of the early eastern dynasties, through the splendid annals of Greece and Rome, down to the latest record of our own era, we are struck by the uniformity with which, after a longer or shorter career,

they have all succumbed to the influences of foreign conquest or of civil war. We see them grow for a time with marvelous rapidity, they attain to a broad and stately dominion, their storehouses swell with abundance, and their arts shed lustre on the age ; but soon they sink as rapidly as they rose, and are left like ruins upon the desert—desolate and pitiable—the wolf howling from their deserted chambers, and the bitterns crying from their broken pools. The writers of history describe the mournful experience, and, wisely or unwisely, speculate upon its causes. They seek for a solution of the problem in fanaticism, in bad morals, in luxury, in the degeneracy of race, and in the inscrutable decrees of Providence—and read us many a lesson out of the conclusions at which they arrive. But the prevalence of a cause, as universal as the effect, and as deep and powerful as the selfishness of man, they have not always signalized. It is that separating and corrosive spirit, which denies the equal claims of all humanity. “ Whether we regard,” says one, “ the caste-systems of Egypt and India, the martial despotism of

Persia, the rule of wealth and craft in Phœnicia, or the class-divisions of Greece, and Rome, and Judea, one obvious characteristic will be found pervading the ancient nations; everywhere the social fabric was built upon the assumption of the natural inequality of man, upon the necessary, because divinely appointed, inferiority of certain races. Not in the superstitious tenets and observances of heathen theology, nor in the absence of a law of right and wrong, nor in any want of the higher powers of humanity, nor in the fatal unconsciousness of their weakness, nor in any difficulties, from which we now have exemption, thrown in the way of a wider benevolence, nor in the lack of such advantages as we are licensed to reap from the discovery of printing, etc.—but in the universal dogma of human inequality, we find the sufficing reason for the imperfect freedom and the inevitable decline of the greatest empires of antiquity.” And, while it is the peculiarity of Christianity that it did proclaim the divine brotherhood of man, not on the ground of any expediency or convenience, but upon the broad foundation of the

common fatherhood of God, and the common redemption by Christ—it is also true of all the Christian nations, that they have risen or fallen, according to their fidelity to this eternal standard. It was the departure from this, by the dissolute emperors, which rendered the Western Empire an easy prey to the barbarians, and, after a protracted but ineffectual struggle, gave the Eastern Empire to the Turks ; it was adherence to this which lifted the Papacy into European dominion, and the abandonment of it which toppled it from its throne ; it was the popular sympathies of the Italian republics which made them, for nearly two centuries, the mothers of all industry, learning, and art, and the growth of aristocracy which consumed their strength : it was the bigotry, and far-reaching despotism of Philip which prostrated the grand Spanish monarchy to a degradation and feebleness from which there has been no resurrection ; and it was the heartless tyranny of the Louises which kindled the train of the world-exploding French revolution. If the Romanic nations were once like Lucifer, the sons of the morning, and have since fallen

like Lucifer, it was because they admitted to their souls Lucifer's infernal ambition. If the Teutonic nations, and especially the Anglo-Saxon branch, have carried the principles of religion, of literature, of stable government, of progressive civilization over the world, it is because they, less than others, have accepted the downward, and backward, and paralyzing spirit of caste. Humanity is one, it is indissoluble, it is sacred; who lays his lightest finger upon it to do it harm, seals his own doom; he degrades and weakens himself in others; he touches the ark of God, in which he has deposited his most precious treasures.

When our country ceases to cherish a love for the rights of man, she will have parted with the secret of her strength. When she takes to her heart any other worship than that of humanity, justice, truth, she will have admitted the serpent into her Eden. Whatever may be the policy and the course of individual states, there is for the nation but one policy and one course. Our birthright of freedom is our only and eternal safeguard.

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